

# AMERICA

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

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DECEMBER 7, 1940

## WHO'S WHO

WILLIAM J. MCGARRY'S favorite pursuit, whether or not he is occupied with editing the *Theological Studies*, is to browse in the fertile pastures of Scripture. Such browsing has led him to a belief that no mere coincidence placed the Feast of Our Lady's Immaculate Conception during Advent season. In scholarly fashion he shows the connection between the mysteries. . . . JOHN LAFARGE is haunted by a thought that many a man of good will, sincerely concerned for human liberty, may yet learn to find liberty's salvation in those great Christian institutions which thoughtless minds, distrustful of God's wisdom, consider to be its enemies. The comparison of the Two Swords was inspired not by memories of the Middle Ages but by the hope that some of our very articulate Liberals may arm themselves with really effective weapons before too late. . . . H. C. MCGINNIS is from Pennsylvania and is new to AMERICA. In view of latest revelations by the Dies Committee, the time seems ripe for discussing his proposal for making the United States less cozy for Communism. . . . THEOPHILUS LEWIS has for several months been bursting to tell of his big experience. Thousands of other laymen in this country also find the closed Retreat a great experience, and likewise they yearn to relate of it. Unable to hold the lid down any longer upon Mr. Lewis, we finally let him explode. . . . FRANCIS MUNTSCHE is a high private in the great army of Hilaire Belloc's admirers. Formerly librarian and instructor in Latin, Roman and Greek History at St. Viator College, he is at present instructor in Latin and History at St. Philip High School, Chicago. . . . RAYMOND GRADY suggests they try visking down in Maine. We are all ready when the party starts.

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Editor-in-Chief: FRANCIS X. TALBOT.

Associate Editors: PAUL L. BLAKELY, JOHN LAFARGE, GERARD DONNELLY,  
JOHN A. TOOMEY, ALBERT I. WHELAN, HAROLD C. GARDINER, J. GERARD MEARS.

Editorial Office: 329 W. 108TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY.

Business Manager: ALBERT I. WHELAN.

Business Office: 53 PARK PLACE, NEW YORK CITY.

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# COMMENT

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PEACE, quiet and contentment in Poland is a message conveyed by attractive folders and pamphlets that arrive periodically at our desk. Carefully attached to this information is a further explanation that any statements to the contrary are the product of anti-Nazi propaganda. The Poles are said to be welcoming the Nordic liberators from British-Jewish pluto-democracy and are sighing in relief that the bad, old days are o'er. We had become pretty well used to the brazenness of Bolshevik tales of milk and honey. Returning travelers from Soviet land have so completely punctured the Workers' Paradise bubbles, that you are mildly amused when anyone starts to blow them again. But we become decidedly queasy at this sort of thing, for it is considerably more persuasive than the Russian posturings. That sinking feeling comes over us after reading the appeal, released on November 26, by the Committee of Polish-American Women in New York City, as to the true state of Poland. It was smuggled out of Poland and was written by a group in Warsaw who had experienced the full horror of the Nazi occupation. "Poland may be free," they write, "but there will be no more Poles. The objective and the endeavor of the Germans is to exterminate and destroy our entire nation. Three millions of us have perished already. This figure increases day to day as famine grows apace."

INNSBRUCK'S Grand Old Man, Father Michael Hofmann, still carries on as *Regens* or Director of the Canisianum, world-famous international seminary for ecclesiastical students. Though now eighty years of age, Father Hofmann is still undaunted by the cruel fate that befell his beloved institution. He is convinced that the motto which brought unity and peace into a household of students from nearly every tribe and tongue, different rites and Religious Orders: *Cor unum et anima una*, will still see the Canisianum brought back to all, or, at least, to most of its former glory. At present the Canisianum is situated in Sion, in Switzerland and attended only by Swiss clerical students. To the great happiness of the school's innumerable friends, the Swiss Federal Council has revoked the order for its closing, which was to go into effect last July. It is understood that, even if and when the school returns to the Tyrol, the present house in Sion will be retained and will carry on work profitable for the Church in Switzerland. Property has been purchased for this purpose in Sion and the school's legal status there definitely and permanently established. In Innsbruck the Nazis confiscated everything, the Canisianum's own splendid modern building, erected in great measure by the contributions of the American alumni, and also the former

Jesuit residence which now has been turned into ordinary apartment houses. But the Nazis will pass and the *Canisi-Haus*, home of learning and charity, will yet return to the land which gave birth to Michael Hofmann and was once freed by Andreas Hofer.

WITH a monumental announcement on November 25, that 1,500 sales exhibitions of work by American artists had been opened all over the country, National Art Week began its celebration. This meant some 130,000 works of art executed by nearly 30,000 artists and craftsmen. The purpose of Art Week was announced as that of stimulating the interest of the American public in American art. The public were to learn through these many and diversified sales exhibitions that works of art may be bought at prices within the means of a large part of the population. Furthermore, the hope was entertained of laying a firm foundation of popular patronage to support the national art. Hope, says Charles Péguy, is but a tiny, shrinking sister of majestic Faith and Charity. She leans upon them for support and is frequently forgotten. Artists have faith, but they do not wish to live by charity. This shrinking hope of patronage dwells within their timid breasts, and it was eloquently expressed by Francis H. Taylor, the new Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. "Never," he said, "has there been such a thrilling mass effort in history to bring a cultural condition to the attention of the people. And this condition of a vigorous and surging appetite for art must be translated into patronage, into dollars and cents." If any who entertain this hope deserve such a "translation," it is the Catholic religious artists who are working independently and not for the church-goods firms. Look for their work and do some translating on your own account.

AXES, in the process of being ground, emit a harsh and strident sound. In recent days it screeches over the sound-track of most of Hollywood's offerings. Propaganda now dominates the movies completely. It is usually popular propaganda, but, because the majority of movie-goers hate the same people and hold the same prejudices, it has become thicker and more daring. But this new liberty, granted to the producers by a complaisant public, is a dangerous thing. It may amuse and fit in with your feelings today—and turn against you tomorrow. Perhaps it was a touching bit about the clear-eyed, clean-cut young Americans who went out to fight for the pure, idealistic democracy of Loyalist Spain that first impressed us that Hollywood, to put it mildly, *oversimplifies* these matters. Then, we are



inclined to doubt the objectivity, the disinterestedness and the ability of the cinema scholars on the West Coast to mold American opinion and to distinguish between the rights and wrongs of national controversies. Art, too, suffers terribly, while the directors are intent on propaganda. When the heroine, reunited with the hero and all set to live happily ever after, nestles in his arms and goes off into a long speech about totalitarianism and democracy, it jars our old-fashioned sense of propriety and artistic truth and we go home depressed and disliking everything.

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VACCINATION of the brain is the newest idea the medicoes have advanced. It seems that the general principle, by which an immunity to specific diseases is built up by small doses of the same virus, can also be applied to meningitis. At least, so it is thought and hoped. But, however the brain may react to germs, it has a totally different reaction to deadly ideas. You cannot inject a little error into it, and add gradually to the dose, in the hope that it will build up an immunity. Error propagates in the brain like bacilli in a biological culture. The same is true for pornographic ideas and images—a little bit of them does not make one immune to fatal quantities, but sets up an itch, a craving for more and more. The only cure for error and rottenness in the mind is not the injection of graded doses of error and rottenness, but a mental sulphanilamide that can kill off all the germs. Is there such a mental cure-all? One Physician that we know has the formula for it.

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HOW many readers of the *New York Times* will grasp the meaning of a brief news item telephoned from Rome on November 26: that Pope Pius XII has attached a 500-day indulgence to the prayer with which he ended his homily on peace, delivered Sunday, November 24? Yet this act of spiritual administration places at the disposal of any man, woman or child, among the living in the worldwide Mystical Body of Christ, a power greater than that of all the credit corporations and export banks in the world. By performing this simple spiritual work of reciting devoutly the Pope's prayer for peace, the individual Christian can command for his own service a share in the prayers, the suffering, the martyrdoms, the sanctities of all Christ's Saints through the ages. He offers to God, Who rules the destinies of the universe, a work equal in value to a year and a half of long and bitter penance in the Spartan days of early Christendom. The Saints and martyrs gave supernatural value to the penance of their living brethren who fasted and went on pilgrimage in former times. They enrich with the same value indulgenced prayers offered by their living brethren in the Church of today. The heavy curse of sin lightened upon the earth; souls liberated for Heaven, who will intercede for us in the conflict; help and strength for the living—these are some of the fruits of an indulgenced prayer.

DOCTOR Coué's chant used to run something like: "Every day, in every way, I'm getting better and better." There, my friends, was confidence unalloyed. Without going as far as the good Doctor, it does seem that we are getting, if not better and better, at least saner and saner in our attitude toward religion and things spiritual. There are many good signs of it. Not the least of them was the recent adoption of the New York State Board of Education of the hour-a-week plan for religious instruction of public school children. And we ran across an article a while ago in the *Religious Digest* which reported a very sane view of some leaders in higher education on the part religion should play in the guidance and adjustment of students. They agree that religious motives and values are essential in helping to keep "mental and emotional jitter-bugs" stable and balanced, and they are sorrowfully forced to admit that such values and motives are but rarely set before pupils in non-Catholic colleges. Dr. Floyd C. Wilcox, writing in the November issue, summarizes the result of questions in this matter, which were answered by about 1,000 students from eight church-related colleges, seven Protestant and one Catholic. Only twenty per cent of the Protestant students stated that their professors frequently referred to the help that can be found in religion for the solution of personal problems, while seventy per cent of the Catholics had this aid brought to their attention. Only eight per cent of the Catholics said that their teachers never referred to this, while fifty-four per cent of the Protestants had to make the same admission. When asked to what extent they themselves relied on the helps to be found in religion, thirty-eight per cent of the Protestants and eighty per cent of the Catholics said they frequently did, forty-two per cent of the Protestants and sixteen per cent of the Catholics that they seldom did, and twenty per cent of the Protestants, four per cent of the Catholics that they never did. It seems that the place for Catholics is the Catholic school and college.

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JUMPING to conclusions is a misguided exercise, for it develops mental muscles to the point of being muscle-bound. The accomplished jumper-at gets so intent and concentrated on leaping to a decision that he cannot relax and keep his poise and wait until the returns are all in. These athletic ones had a great field day not long ago at the expense of Leopold of the Belgians. They jumped high, wide and handsome and records toppled. But now we hear that they may all have to be disallowed. Of course, at the time, the Archbishop of Mechlin, Cardinal Van Roey, came to the defense of the King's honor, but who was interested in what he had to say? Now Ambassador Cudahy and Herbert Hoover publish an exculpation in *Life*. Perhaps the mental athletes were a little too jumpy—perhaps we shall soon see them jumping backwards. The charity which would have put the best, and not the worst, possible interpretation on the King's actions, would have saved the jumpers-at-conclusions from an embarrassing retro-saltation.

# FLOURISHING WOODEN LATHS WILL FRIGHTEN NO DEMONS

JOHN LAFARGE

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EACH year, as it comes around, I read with increasing delight the story of David's choice of a sword. Young David, fleeing from King Saul, came to Achimelech the priest and said to him:

Hast thou here at hand a spear or a sword? For I brought not my own sword, nor my own weapons with me, for the King's business required haste.

And the priest said: Lo, here is the sword of Goliath the Philistine whom thou slewest in the valley of Terebinth, wrapped up in a cloth behind the ephod: if thou wilt take this, take it, for here is no other but this. And David said, There is none like that, give it me. (I Kings, xxi, 8 and 9.)

David, being a shepherd boy, knew exactly what would work with any kind of monster. Before the face of the totalitarian Goliath, we are feverishly looking for a spiritual sword, to guard our homes, our liberties, our country. Somehow I cannot find much assurance in the sort of spiritual weapon that Charlie Chaplin is providing. Several million light bulbs displayed in Times Square do not lessen my doubt as to whether ridicule, speeches or sound-effects count for much against a pagan philosophy that threatens to inundate the world. But we can be seriously concerned with a couple of spiritual swords recently offered to modern Davids.

One of these is from London, and has been taken from behind the ephod by Westminster's high priest, Cardinal Hinsley. Among English Catholics the Cardinal has inaugurated a movement called the Sword of the Spirit. The essential purpose of this movement, as explained by Christopher Dawson, "is not the preaching of Catholic principles (though the assertion of these principles can never be regarded as a matter of minor importance), but the organization and coordination of our spiritual forces against the evil forces that are attempting to conquer the world."

Says the Cardinal himself:

The first article in the program of the "Sword of the Spirit" is the sanctity of the family and the value of child life. We must resist the idea that the State or Party is a godlike power which claims families as its bounden slaves. We must proclaim the natural order, that the family comes before the State in origin and importance. . . .

The second article in our program of the "Sword of the Spirit" is this doctrine of Saint Paul—the unity of international society. We preach in and out of season that the Nations or States of the world cannot live in isolated seclusion one from the other. To have peace and to keep peace—which is the tranquillity of order—the members of the one body of mankind must work together for the good of all.

With all our might and main we members of the

Society of the Sword of the Spirit are determined to uphold the sanctity of the family on which the soundness of each nation depends, and the Brotherhood of man in Christ on which international peace, through order and justice and charity, rests.

One of the best guarantees that the Cardinal's program is unwelcome to Nazis is that they have bitterly attacked it over the Netherlands radio.

The other spiritual sword is presented to us by a group of Liberals at home, Herbert Agar, editor of *Louisville Courier-Journal*, Thomas Mann, Lewis Mumford and fifteen others. It appeared on November 29 in booklet form, as a "Declaration on World Democracy" entitled *The City of Man*. The Declaration is followed by a Proposal, as to how to carry the ideas of the Declaration into effect.

It is interesting, at least for the writer, to compare the two spiritual weapons, which for brevity's sake might be termed the Sword of Faith and the Liberal Sword.

The motto inscribed upon the sword of Mr. Agar and his companions, as I understand their composite declaration, is the idea that the United States should cast off its weeds of humility and assume the spiritual leadership of the world, and this leadership should take the form of a Religion of Humanity. This religion, from its very nature, will be a religion of democracy.

There is no imperialism in this, they claim, for imperialism is found only when "lust for power chooses for a self-appointed primacy." Rather it is "imperium," which falls to the lot of "those who are chosen by the objective circumstances of history for a privilege which is a service, for a right which is a duty. This is, indeed, the substance of a chosen people: power in the frame of service." So history has chosen America for leadership.

The Liberal Sword admits the principle of finality. This should lift it out of the slough of Behaviorism, which can only squeak and gibber in the face of the totalitarians. We may only have freedom, or democracy, says the Declaration, through "absolute allegiance to the final goal of man." But man's final goal is not to be found in the "promise of some transcendent bliss to come" which "deserves the scorn of Marx." Man's goal is "progress and growth in intellect and action"; final end of the individual as well as of the people. The universal religion of democracy teaches that "everything must be within humanity, nothing against humanity, nothing outside of humanity"

This being the case, the Liberals believe that the



time has come for a showdown with the principal or "higher" religions now existing in the United States. The idea that Protestants and Catholics and Jews can live together in civic peace and harmony while each religious body professes its peculiar beliefs intact is repugnant to democracy. For democracy is a new religion. Democracy "is the plenitude of heart-service to a highest religion embodying the essence of all higher religions." Since this "highest religion" admits nothing which is outside of humanity, it comes into absolute conflict with the Catholic Church.

However, there are certain socially useful ideas to be found in the Catholic Church and the other "higher religions." Some of these may be allowed to stand. A group of experts entrusted with the study of the issue of religion "will select what is socially useful and suppress the rest." So the Liberal Sword will do some hewing right into our traditional American way of life. Apparently there is a centuries-old excrescence of religious tolerance in our Constitution which will have to be excised.

This interventionist program is announced with various qualifications and reservations. It evidently causes some qualms to the liberal minds of its authors. I am not concerned about the future of the Church in this country, for I believe in the common sense of a sufficient percentage of the American people. But I am concerned that men of the intelligence of Mr. Agar and some of his group should violently reject the only sort of instrument with which you *can* effectively combat the menace of totalitarianism and should wish to waste their time brandishing a hopelessly feeble yet intolerant weapon. The intelligence which they display in some very pertinent observations as to the relation between totalitarianism and economic misery should suffice to show them the difference between a sword of steel and a sword of lath and tinsel.

The Sword of Faith inspires terror, of necessity, in the minds of those who uttered this Declaration, for it is fashioned of the very things that they deny: belief in an eternal and unchanging Being Who stands above (though not outside of) humanity and reveals Himself in truths which we call dogma. That the God-Man reveals Himself and communicates Himself to the individual soul through a visible Church, that this Church deals as an unchanging Absolute with the changing trends and governments of men, this is still more alarming. I do not blame them for being frightened, for their view is confused, and their misconceptions hereditary. And the Sword of the Spirit is terrifying. There is nothing reassuring to bourgeois comfort in the sanction placed by God's law upon the right to life, freedom and the pursuit of happiness inherent in the soul of the least child, even the unborn. An international society that is governed by Divine justice toward all the humble and lowly of the world and exacts the toll of Christ's charity is no picnic; it is a tough place for the selfish and easy-going to live in. As I say, I do not blame them. But I pity them, or those who follow them, because they are trying to combat racist, Nazi Socialism with their own brand of Socialism. In their belief

that it is unsafe to trust man absolutely to an absolute God, they abandon man to the mercies of an absolute humanity.

Every year some one hundred thousand Catholic laymen in the United States take time off—two days, three or more days—to ponder upon these same dogmas which inspire terror to the writers of the Declaration but are the steel of the Sword of Faith. One of this 100,000 tells of his experiences in this very issue of AMERICA; and I suspect this layman has more confidence in these dogmas as a guarantee of his rights as a citizen in a democracy than he has in the collective will of the democratic majority even of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Confidence, that is to say, if the dogmas are understood through study and contemplation and are applied to our civic and social life in their literal integrity. We can grant, without making an intellectual potlatch of it, that many a Catholic at home or abroad acts in a way to cause uneasiness to the foes of totalitarian tyranny. There are men and governments who yearn to make tools out of religion. The job seeker and the patronage dispenser are always with us. They can organize under the title of charity and deceive even the elect. There are Catholics who conform supinely to the majority's prejudices in their social, their religious, their educational notions. Such are in every Commonwealth, and in every belief or unbelief; except that when they are Catholics, they draw attention (and a just censure) by their inconsistency with the doctrines they profess as Catholics. Otherwise they go unnoticed. And this kind are fodder for the totalitarians. But one and all they move and act and have their unsavory being because they have abandoned dogma in their practical lives. They have become fascinated (consciously or unconsciously) by the idea that man finds the norm of his conduct in the approbation of his fellow man. The result is a straight pathway to tyranny in the supposed attempts to escape it.

Whatever form the ideas expressed in this and such-like Declarations may take, whether they develop into National Liberalism or an American National Socialism or a full-fledged Religion of Democracy, I think we Catholics waste our time in merely showing up their inconsistencies. The Liberal Sword may readily prove to be a wooden lath once it swings into action. Far more profitable is it for us to busy ourselves in fashioning our own Sword of Steel: to study deeply, prayerfully the teachings of our Church and find in them the guarantees of freedom and democracy. Pope Leo XIII rebuked the enemies of democracy by reminding them that a truly democratic society is a society which "has that form and character which its Divine Author imposed upon it." When we know what that form and character is, and have the courage to live up to it, we shall have a Sword of the Spirit in our hands which will keep America's form and character. The totalitarians assail this form and character. The "religion of humanity" unconsciously betrays it. But God gave it to our country from the beginning and we Catholics can defend it if we know and practise our Faith.

# MUST THE CONSTITUTION PROTECT THOSE WHO WOULD DESTROY IT?

H. C. McGINNIS

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WHEN, on October 7, Governor Olsen signed a legislative act outlawing the Communist Party from California's ballot, many people, including some of Communism's most active antagonists, felt the American right of free political expression was getting an unfair jolt. Yet it was not; for while our Constitution guarantees the right to propagate political ideologies by legal means, it does not admit fraud, deceit and trickery to be legal forces. When Governor Olsen signed the bill he announced the demand for legislation against alien controlled parties "has been aggravated by the scurrilous methods and abusive manner in which Communists either openly or under cover, carry on their political activities." Since the bill was passed with only one dissenting vote in the Senate and three in the assembly, it is plain California's recent Red experiences simply compelled the action.

California is not alone. Several other States have suffered recent experiences which cause their citizens to consider seriously banning Communism. Let us look at a sample of what has been going on. The conviction of thirty persons on October 31, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on charges of conspiracy and perjury growing out of Communist election petitions, is not an isolated case, but only one of many similar State-wide exposures.

The Pittsburgh case proves most conclusively that Communists have no idea of the American system of decency or, if they have, they ignore it completely, counting on American tolerance for forgiveness. Pennsylvania's election code permits a wide latitude in political actions and the requirements for any group to appear on the ballot are not unreasonable. One requirement is that a circulator of a political petition must be a citizen and a registered voter. But the Communists openly flouted this requirement, evidently believing a registration with Moscow supersedes American requirements; for the trials proved many of the Communist political workers had no legal right to vote or to participate in fulfilling the legal requirements of pre-election activities. But the discovery of this law violation was only the beginning of a sickening mess of fraud, perjury, misrepresentation and forgery. This evidence was so overwhelming one need not go far into the details to convince himself that Communism grossly abused its status as a legal party, in addition to admitting the weakness of its preachments by resorting to perjury, fraud and utter misrepresentation to secure signers for its petitions.

When the petitions were scrutinized, the real methods of Communist activities were plainly disclosed. A public-spirited newspaper contacted the thousands of names on the petitions to verify the signatures. The results were shocking. Hundreds denied they had signed and offered substantial proof; some being unable to write, some having been out of town at the time, and others disclaiming any knowledge whatever of even a request to sign. Of the thousands of alleged signers, about 900 were called as witnesses at the trials. Many of these witnesses admitted their signatures but proved the petitions were misrepresented. Many colored people had been told they were signing to place a Negro in some local office; others were told it was a petition for better work; mothers were told they were signing to keep their sons out of war. The misrepresentations were legion: any old reason being given to secure a signature and often, when it could not be secured through the owner's action, it was added to the list by forgery.

Communist petitions in other Pennsylvania counties also resulted in convictions or indictments still awaiting trial. The frauds were sufficiently numerous to deny the Communist party a place on the ballot but, unfortunately, the discoveries came too late. Other States, however, were more fortunate. Ohio had a similar experience and discovered the fraudulent activities in time to exclude the Reds from the November ballot. West Virginia and New Jersey also were victims of this outrage against American procedure and, of course, California had ample cause for its action.

When matters get to the above point, the time for action has arrived. We Americans permit all kinds of ideologies to exist under our government and do not deny the right to their propagation, provided the activities are not subversive and the propagation is done under the legal procedure set up for the governing of anyone and everyone. But we are entirely within our Constitutional rights in removing the legal guise which cloaks the activities of any group working under the direction of foreign agencies to weaken and destroy American democratic institutions.

Yet, in spite of these wide-spread disclosures, there are still many citizens who really believe the Constitution requires continued toleration of these un-American groups. An examination of the Constitution proves otherwise. As dyed-in-the-wool believers in American freedom of expression and



thought, let us ask ourselves what is our Constitution. That instrument we guard so zealously is a guarantee of personal rights and liberties, written by Americans expressly for Americans. It was never intended to cover any peoples except those claiming the American flag as their flag. Never in our history have we tried to impose our Constitution upon anyone outside American territory. So, therefore, it must be our evident intention that our Constitution apply only to Americans.

Many of the most active Communists in our midst enjoy no legal status of American citizenship, while many others are citizens in name, but admittedly owe a prior allegiance to the Moscow government, receiving their instructions, orders, aims and inspirations from that source. No court in the land will rule that any group or organization which vows to forcibly destroy our form of government is an American institution; and since our Constitution is designed to protect only American institutions, why should we be so squeamish about protecting ourselves from the activities of an organization which professes its hatred of American institutions with every breath? Although we admit the right of our citizens to change our form of government, should such a change become desirable to the majority, we do insist any changes be made in the American way by due democratic procedure.

Many Americans think those Communists who are American citizens have a legal right to organize as a political party and to demand the protection of the government it seeks to destroy. This feeling is mostly due to a misunderstanding of the protection given by the First Amendment to our Constitution, the first item in our treasured Bill of Rights, in the matter of free speech and free press. It is true our Constitution guarantees these rights, but it is equally true that, under certain circumstances, they can be temporarily suspended. The Writ of Habeas Corpus has always been considered a far more important right than the right of free press and free speech. Our Founding Fathers made sure to include this human right in Article I of the Constitution, but in doing so they included the right of the Republic to suspend even this priceless gem of freedom in cases of rebellion, invasion or under martial law. If, then, the Constitution gives the right to suspend even that guarantee of freedom when emergency demands, how much more does it intend that we should deny the protection of our laws to people who place the dictates of outside destructive forces above the peace and dignity of the American people?

It is not the essence of democracy that it should render itself helpless. Australia, a truly democratic commonwealth, did not feel it gave democracy a set-back when it recently outlawed Communism and showed much better judgment than France which outlawed Communism too late to save itself from its destructive work.

The outlawing of Communism by State or Federal action depends, of course, upon the majority will of the people; but a few instances like the following one now being fought out by a certain Pennsylvania community serve to crystallize public opin-

ion rapidly. This community's school board recently discharged a high-school teacher for signing a Communist petition. Of course, there was more behind the action than the signing of the petition, the school board's solicitor contending the teacher had been accused of "a course of action" extending over a year, resulting in the teacher's transfer from the teaching of history.

The dismissal proceedings turned out to be quite interesting. After all, parents have the right to insist their children shall not be under the influence of subversive teachings and attitudes, yet the teacher was within his full rights in signing the petition of a party enjoying full legal status in the State. The dismissal was made on a charge of "immorality." This "immorality" charge did not accuse the teacher of dissolute habits but did claim he had acquired an unfavorable reputation through his choice of associates and an advocacy of Communism. In other words the school board is claiming that immorality in a teacher can consist of losing the community's confidence and respect, which destroys his usefulness as a teacher.

This case has now reached the legal phase, the dismissed teacher demanding redress under the State's Teachers' Tenure Act which lists causes for dismissal. Political activity is not a listed cause. Actually, the dismissed teacher seems to be within his legal rights, for the State law gave its benediction to the Communist Party when it permitted it to participate in State elections as a recognized party. The trouble is that, in this instance, public sentiment has advanced beyond the letter of the law and the public is demanding its moral right to have its children taught by people who do not believe in or admire the destructive doctrines urged by Moscow.

That an obviating of further occurrences of this kind in Pennsylvania may soon be done by an official outlawing of Communism within the State is suggested by a late October ruling by the Board of Review of the State Unemployment Compensation Division in the case of a State employe discharged for election activities which favored a Communist candidate. The Board's decision held the Communist Party is "admittedly an enemy of the United States and its form of government" and therefore members or sympathizers of the Communist Party may legally be dismissed from government service. It further held that even the signing of a Communist election petition constitutes giving aid and comfort to an admitted enemy of the United States. However, the Board's decision is not the final word and there may be long drawn out legal battles over its decision.

America's safety in this world crisis demands a thorough cleaning out of the destructive forces in our midst. If we persist in winking the legal eye at something we know in our hearts to be destructive and un-American, we shall later pay the penalty, perhaps much to our sorrow. Legislation usually follows public opinion and public opinion has become crystallized by plentiful examples of the flagrant abuse by Communists of the rights and privileges America accords those in her midst.

# THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION IN THE LITURGY OF ADVENT

WILLIAM J. McGARRY, S.J.

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THE Feast of the Immaculate Conception falls within the four weeks of Advent preparation for the coming of the Son of God. It is a feast of great joy; yet Advent is a season of penance. The priest wears purple vestments during the Advent offices. But on the Virgin's feast he is clothed in white vestments to symbolize Mary's purity, or he is seen in flaming gold. The day is a royal one and celebrates our Queen's first honors and elevation. In some parts of the world, the celebrant is vested in blue, the color of Mary. This signifies the heavenly serenity of unclouded holiness in the Immaculate Mother of God.

All this liturgical splendor and significance are proper to Our Lady, but they would seem not to harmonize with the solemn colors of the Advent period. All the joy and jubilation which ring out in the Mass and Office of the Immaculate Conception seem to clash dissonantly with those heavier notes which belong to the "little Lent" before Christmas and the larger Lent which runs up to Passiontide and Calvary.

Further, the liturgy in other places definitely sets feasts of glory outside its more solemn seasons of penance. The joyous Feast of the Annunciation on March 25 would fall occasionally within the two weeks of Passion-tide. When it does so, the Church postpones it until the Monday following Easter Sunday, so that the joy of Mary in Christ's coming at the Annunciation answers the joy of His rising out of death.

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception fell naturally within Advent, because long before its institution the Nativity of Our Lady was celebrated on September 8. The Church kept the new Feast of Mary within the penitential season. Far from thinking that its gladness contrasted with the Advent penance, she knew that its joy was part of the Advent joy. Its meaning made more emphatic the perfect beauty and splendor of God's own way of preparing earth and man for the coming of the Son of God.

Advent is a time of penance, but of joyful and jubilant penance. The *alleluia*, the Church's liturgical cry of joy, is not dropped in Advent. During this time we are preparing ourselves for Our Lord's birth by deeds of self-denial. At the same time we are filled with expectation, jubilation and alacrity. He Who is to come is not far away and He is not tarrying. The King, Victor and Saviour is seen approaching by the watchmen on the ramparts of our

earthly Sion—or to put it as the Advent liturgy does, with added dramatic directions:

*(the watchman: to himself)*

Looking from afar, lo, I see  
The Might of God coming  
And a cloud covering all the earth.

*(the watchman: to the citizens below)*

Go out to meet Him, and say:

"Tell us; art thou He

Who is to rule in Israel?"

Ye earth-born, ye who are the sons of man,

All, rich and poor,

Go out to Him and say:

"Thou ruler of Israel, o'ersee!

Thou who ledest Joseph as a sheep,

Tell us: Art thou He?"

Princes! Lift up your gates.

Be lifted up, ye eternal portals,

And the King of glory shall enter in.

This is a typical Advent passage in celebration of the gladness of the coming of the King. Naturally in this liturgy Our Lady is likewise to be found, and she was there long before this feast of hers was introduced. Among many beautiful Advent passages on Mary we may cite the following:

Take up, O Virgin Mary

The Lord's message through the angel:

"Thou shalt conceive and bear

One Who is both God and Man."

And thus you may be titled

"Blessed among all women."

You shall indeed bring forth a Son,

Yet know through Him no Virgin's loss.

You shall indeed be made with Child,

Yet remain forever chastest Mother.

Harmoniously, then, the Feast and the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception belong to the spirit and purpose of Advent. The preparation of Our Lady was a principal part of God's preparation of the world and man for the birth of the Divine Saviour. It was part of the counsel of the Triune God that a mother, who had never for one moment of her existence been under the shadow of sin, should bear in her all-pure body the Child Who was to save mankind from the wages of sin. During these Advent days, when we are looking forward to His birth and making ourselves ready for our reception of Him, the Son of God is beneath the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Not for a moment in her Advent prayers is the Church forgetful that she is making a pilgrimage to Bethlehem. Far out in front of the throng of men is the Virgin on her journey to the sacred cave of the Child's birth.

The words which are used most often in all the Advent liturgy very beautifully keep an Immacu-



late Mary before the minds of the Church's children:

Drop down dew, ye heavens,  
And let the clouds rain the Just One.  
Let the earth be opened,  
And bud forth a Saviour.

This prayer is a daily plea made to God that the Son of Man, the Just One and Saviour, come. He is the refreshing dew which will cure the sin-parched land of men, feed it and nourish its soil, give life again to all that is dead within it. The Incarnation is God's eternal spring. Very aptly in the versicle taken from Isaias, the peerless poet of Christmas-tide, is the Incarnation of the Son of God presignified, not only in its heavenly aspects but in those as well which have to do with earth.

Our Lady is this earth which first felt the vivifying dews which fell from heaven. She is the land in whose sky-drenched womb of soil the bud and branch, which is the Christ of the prophecies, was to burgeon and grow strong. If in the versicle the functions of Heaven and earth are outlined in the Incarnation of the Word, then principally in the bedewed earth we see the portrait of our Immaculate Mother.

Something deep and suggestive lies in this ancient prophecy and prayer of Isaias, who wrote and prayed these words some seven centuries before the earth rejoiced in the coming of Christ and Mary. Quite appropriately the man to whom God first gave the secret that a Virgin should bear Emmanuel, Our God with us, was the first to pray his *Rorate coeli*, "Drop down dew, ye heavens," in words in which both the heavenly and earthly aspects of the Incarnation are contained.

For this Saviour is to come to men who live on earth. She, too, from whom He came, was part and atom of the sinful race of man. Yet before she can be included in the throng, she is set apart by God and separated from her fellowmen. They just await a Saviour; she is the one from whom He is to spring. Yet she did not bear Him before her own fertility was Heaven-cleansed and Heaven-caused. The dew of God was teeming with God's blessings for man, yet first of all it fell in plenary and bursting clouds upon her before whom others waited for its refreshing drops.

In this figure, then, the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception is poetically told. It marks out Mary's need of redemption by the Just One; it also marks out Mary's purification before the salvation of God was to come to other men. All are redeemed; but while men are purchased out of a captivity and brought back from an exile which is an actual thing, until the grace of Baptism or perfect love is given them, Mary had the manifold gifts of Heaven poured into her soul in the first instant of her time on earth. Men are subject to a privation of grace which endures nine months and more—and for many, endures until an act of love reaches God's throne from their dawning reasons and newly responsible wills. Mary's soul was never subject to this lack of grace, was never unfilled with the plenitude of grace, was never an instant not the most beloved object of all creation before the eyes

of God—below only the utter sanctity of the Sacred Humanity of her own Son.

The revelation which gave hope to man, even while he was blushing for his sin within the gates of Eden, spoke of the Immaculate Mother of mercy before the dull content of the penalty of sin fell on the ears of the first sinner. God cursed the serpent first, while the human culprits awaited their sentences, and during the Divine curse of sin they heard Him speak of the woman and her seed, who would crush the serpent's head.

The long Advent of God between Adam and Christ, and man's long journey from the locked portals of a lost Paradise to Bethlehem's cavern—all that wearying journey on earth and God's guidance of it from Heaven—is filled with notices of hope for man, because now the Son and Seed is promised, and again the Maid and Mother.

It is no wonder that the story of that Advent in the ancient Scriptures has been searched by the Saints and Doctors of the Church for Mary's praise and honor. Let us recall some of these allusions to Our Lady and thus make this sad Advent of 1940 more gladsome. She is the turn of Adam's curse, and the payment of Eve's debt. She is Abel's pure offering, the choicest of the first-fruits, and the cleanliest sacrifice. She is Enoch's grace of translation to life beyond, and his bourn within an eternal life secure. She is Noah's Ark and the peace of the generation which is left to survive. She is the gleaming splendor of Melchisedech's priesthood and sovereignty; Abraham's firm faith and the security of the promises of blessings to come. She is the new sacrifice of Isaac; Jacob's ladder of ascent on high, and the noblest offspring of Israel's fertility.

She is the mirror in which is reflected the bearing of the prophecies, and the issue of events which are portrayed in them. She is Ezechiel's closed gate through which no man would go save the Lord God; she is Isaias' rod of Jesse from which bloomed the bud and flower, Christ. She is Jeremias' new promise to the sons of men, and of Daniel, the man of dreams, she is the mount from which is cut the corner-stone of all.

She is the delight of the Eternal Father, through whom the knowledge and love of God were borne to the ends of the earth, the domicile of the Incarnate Son, whence He came forth full-clothed in flesh, the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit and the vessel of His plenary graces.

There is a story in the Office of the Feast of Lourdes—our second annual celebration of the Immaculate Conception—which moves one by its simplicity and depth. The Virgin, insistently asked by Bernadette, "folded her arms over her breast, lifted her eyes to Heaven, and replied: 'I am the Immaculate Conception.'"

This, then, is the Queen of angels and men whom we celebrate on this joyous Feast of our Advent. This is she whom our fathers of old called the all-innocent hospice of innocence, the dwelling house of the Triune's graces, the dawn of the sun of justice, the light without an evening. Through our prayers to God may we be pleasing in His holy sight and in the sight of Mary, our Mother.

# A LAYMAN'S FIRST RETREAT REWARDS WITH RICH DIVIDENDS

THEOPHILUS LEWIS

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TO a born Catholic, a Retreat may be just one of the numerous religious activities which the spiritual munificence of the Church provides for her children. When one has made several Retreats, the temporary escapes from the fret and frivolity of life may become almost prosaic. It is possible that when I am older in the Faith, I will look back on my present feeling as the enthusiasm of a recent convert. But now I feel that my first Retreat was a novel and profound experience and that future Retreats will be equally significant.

When I arrived at St. Anthony's Mission House, where members of the Catholic Laymen's Union were about to begin their Retreat, I fear I was not in a definitely introspective frame of mind. My attitude was rather like that of the Athenians, described in Acts, who were ever curious to see or hear some new thing. I knew, of course, that a Retreat was a brief withdrawal from the cares of the world, and a period for taking spiritual inventory and planning a healthier readjustment to life. But I wondered whether the round of activities would resemble those of an old-fashioned camp meeting or a modern tourists' camp, where the "camping" is enjoyed in air-conditioned cabins with built-in showers, electric refrigeration and remote control radios.

Such queries, of course, could not have entered the mind of a seasoned Catholic. But I was a new Catholic, baptized less than a year.

Perhaps I should explain that the Catholic Laymen's Union is a group of Catholic colored professional and business men and the Retreat is an annual event in their program of Catholic Action. St. Anthony's, where the Retreats are held, is in the metropolitan district of New Jersey. The grounds are rather spacious, however, and the buildings are set back some distance from the road, from which they are screened by an ancient growth of huge trees. On the porch of the Mission, or the nearby Retreat house, not more than a five minutes' walk from a busy thoroughfare, one has the impression of being many miles from any considerable center of population.

Needless to say, the hotel luxuries I had half anticipated were not in evidence. Not that there was any lack of physical comforts, as all the essential needs of the body were amply supplied. It is true that for a while I was extremely ill at ease, but my discomfort was caused solely by the state of moral unpreparedness in which I began.

I have not yet learned to take Confession in stride, as a veteran Catholic does. My usual feeling is that I have not committed any sins serious enough to make Confession necessary, and I habitually delay my penitence until my wife hands me my hat and shoves me out the door. On the way to the church I experience a violent reversal of feeling. Before I reach the confessional I have become so conscious of enormous guilt that I am sure the priest will feel himself contaminated by listening to my story of depravity.

Our Retreat Director, as we quickly learned, was a priest of exceptional personal magnetism. At the end of his first talk, which preceded Benediction, the Director casually observed that if any of us wished to make a Confession he would be available after devotions. I tripped over that "if" and, figuratively, fell embarrassingly on my ear. I decided to defer my Confession until the next day, or more likely until the last day of the Retreat. At Mass the next morning, all the other retreatants knelt before the altar to receive Holy Communion, leaving me alone in the pews, in what seemed to be an immense vacuum of perdition. That, for me, was the real beginning of the Retreat.

The first discourse was a kind of preface to the talks which were to follow. The substance of the Director's remarks was that the Retreat was ours and not his, and the benefits we received would depend upon the earnestness of our prayers and meditations. That is palpably true, at least subjectively, still, I cannot dismiss the impression that the fervor of the retreatants depends in large measure upon the inspiration imparted to them by the priest who serves as their spiritual *cicerone*.

The Director was a thin, wiry, young priest, with nervous, eloquent hands and a pale, narrow face which at first sight appeared rather spectral. But as he quickened the tempo and heightened the interest of his discourses, apparently becoming more interested himself, his countenance lost its pallor and assumed a glowing transparency which expressed a serene elevation of mind and soul. His talks were delivered in an informal, almost colloquial style, but under apparent casualness his subjects were developed with the precision of a Beethoven symphony. Their effect, after we had listened to the first few discourses, was a cumulative clarification of Christian doctrine I would not have believed possible in so short a time.

The doctrinal sermon is one feature of Protestant



worship that is acutely missed by a recently converted Catholic. To one accustomed to the lengthy discourses from Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian pulpits, our Catholic sermons squeezed in between Masses seem inadequate. The reasons why the parson preaches longer than the priest are numerous and well known. In our parish, for example, we have five Masses, beginning at seven o'clock. In the Methodist church a few blocks away there is only one Sunday morning service, which begins at eleven o'clock and may continue until after one. The minister, if he cares to, can devote a full hour to preaching. Indeed, he is almost compelled to preach an hour, for Protestant worship, except the Episcopalian, does not include the Mass but is built around the sermon. While members of Protestant sects commonly listen to discourses almost or quite an hour long, Catholic laymen are seldom edified by a sermon that lasts longer than fifteen minutes, except over the radio.

One of the benefits derived from a Retreat and, I am inclined to think, the one of first importance, is the opportunity to hear an exposition of Christian teaching. This goes a long way toward making up for the brevity of our Sunday sermons. Physically isolated from the routine of life, with the cares of the world cast aside as they can never be between Saturday and Monday, the retreatants are in a sensitive and receptive state of mind. They are prepared to concentrate on the truths of the Faith and grasp them with a new and clearer understanding. With minds free of distractions, they readily comprehend the wisdom and beautiful logic of the Fathers of the Church, learning anew the spiritual and rational bases of Christian morality. In all quiet and peace they forge weapons for the spiritual warfare.

An astute Retreat-master can make the re-introduction to the essentials of the Faith an exhilarating adventure. The Director had a rare gift for spicing a point of scripture or doctrine with a dash of humor. Before the series of discourses was half completed, I—and I believe all of us—had gained a better understanding of how the dogmas, Sacraments and ethics of the Church amplify and reinforce each other, strengthening our conviction that our religion is rational as well as right.

We so rarely petition God to enter our daily lives, so seldom invite Him to counsel and control our dealings with our fellowmen, that we habitually think of Him as King of the Universe, enthroned in a remote Heaven, or we think of Him as an austere and exacting Judge, Who will condemn us according to our sins instead of being clement according to His mercy. The Director reminded us that the Saviour taught us to say "Our Father" to a paternal and friendly God, more ready to forgive than punish. Our Father came intimately close to us. As we sat under the magnetic spell of the Director's voice or walked in silence under the ancient trees, He revealed His will through the discourses, cloaking us with His presence during our meditations. We approached close to oneness, in affinity if not in holiness, with the disciples and Saints.

There was one among us who seemed to have

reached a serenity of spirit which suggested that even in the turmoil of daily life he had learned to live not far from the Kingdom of Heaven. He was an elderly man, whose genuflections were stiff and arrested considerably above the floor. A great deal of his time was spent ministering to our physical comfort and he went about his tasks with a quiet, deliberate efficiency. All of us observed silence most of the day, but a man's character has a way of asserting itself without words. This man's quietness seemed to come from the recesses of a profoundly tranquil soul.

He seemed happiest when performing some necessary task in the chapel. There was only one acolyte in our group and at times he was a bit tardy or delayed by overlapping duties. Although the chapel was small, it contained two altars and occasionally two priests were saying Mass at the same time. When minor emergencies threatened to develop, our elderly retreatant was always alert to keep things running smoothly by serving a priest at the altar, locating a misplaced taper, or lighting the candles. He arranged the temporary Stations of the Cross under the great oaks and on the final afternoon of our Retreat collected the little wooden crosses to be stored away for future service. There was no officiousness about him, no hint of the unspoken but obvious vanity of saving the situation. Each act of helpfulness appeared to be a simple expression of piety, a spontaneous willingness to serve humbly in the House of the Lord.

That quiet and forceful man contributed substantially to the rejuvenation of soul which we hoped would be the result of our Retreat. At least, that was the impression association with him left in the mind of one retreatant. It was his presence, I think, that was the visible anchor of the fellowship that existed among us. At first our comradeship was more gregarious than spiritual. Among those who had made the Retreat before there was a fraternity akin to class reunion. With a deeply devout soul moving among us, while the Director accelerated his unfolding of the truths of the Faith, our fellowship quickly lost its social alloy and became mutual intimacy in a vital and invigorating spiritual experience.

On our last evening at St. Anthony's, after Benediction, the Director warned us to avoid the assurance that we had made a good Retreat. He believed we had been earnest in our devotions and meditations, he said, but the test would be how well we carried out our resolutions when we resumed the cares and encountered the temptations of secular life.

The next morning we attended our final Mass. We could break silence then, and at breakfast, for the first time, talked during a meal. Although we conversed freely, mainly in inconsequential small talk, there was an undercurrent of restraint among us. We were not entirely happy to be returning to the world. Our brief sojourn in Christian seclusion had introduced us to the joy of a purely religious life. Perhaps we felt a mite of the yearning after holiness which moved the Saints to withdraw altogether from the world.

# CHRONICLE

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**THE ADMINISTRATION.** Dr. Harry A. Millis was sworn in as chairman of the National Labor Relations Board. . . . President Roosevelt stated that all public-works expenditures except those directly connected with production of defense armaments will be cut to the bone. . . . Following a White House conference which discussed methods of preventing strikes in defense plants, Mr. Roosevelt announced his intention to keep such plants open and uninjured by sabotage. . . . After eighty-year-old General John J. Pershing refused, for reasons of health, the Ambassadorship to the Vichy Government in France, President Roosevelt selected Rear Admiral William D. Leahy, retired, Governor of Puerto Rico, for the post to replace William C. Bullitt who resigned. . . . Mr. Roosevelt allocated \$50,000,000 for construction operations on the eight naval and air bases leased from Great Britain. The \$50,000,000 is part of the \$100,000,000 fund voted to the President to be used at his discretion for national defense. . . . United States Navy patrol planes are already operating from bases in Bermuda, Trinidad, Newfoundland and other British Western Hemisphere possessions, Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox revealed. . . . Upon arriving in New York from England the Marquess of Lothian, British Ambassador to the United States, said that Britain was approaching the end of its monetary resources and would need financial assistance in 1941. . . . Secretary Stimson opposed expansion of the civilian air lines, declared such expansion prevented plants from producing combat planes in sufficient quantities for the United States and Britain. President Roosevelt disclosed the Government wants to keep commercial aviation going on its present scale but did not want it to expand.

**CONGRESS.** Senator Taft proposed erection of a war-resources administration under a single administrator endowed with authority to "cut across red tape and give his undivided attention to the one vast problem of industrial teamwork for defense. We now have a National Defense Advisory Commission made up of seven able men without a chairman. This body, however, is purely advisory." . . . Representative Cox characterized the strike of the C.I.O. at the Vultee airplane plant in California as "treason," asserted the Congressional commitments of \$16,000,000,000 for defense would be imperilled if labor were allowed to strike in plants producing armaments. . . . The Senate Committee on Campaign Expenditures turned over to the Department of Justice evidence indicating ballot-box stuffing and other election-law violations in Harlan, Bell and Pike Counties, Kentucky. In five precincts containing 1,795 registered voters, 2,216 were recorded as voting. In a score of districts, the primary elec-

tion vote recorded exceeded the number of printed ballots distributed to the election officers, Senator Gillette said. . . . The Senate and House moved to temporary quarters until the roofs of their chambers, pronounced unsafe, could be repaired. The House moved to the Caucus Room of the new House Office Building, the Senate to the old Supreme Court room which housed the Senate in the days of Clay, Webster, Calhoun. The move marks the first time either chamber has met in other than its regular quarters since the two wings of the Capitol were completed—the House wing in 1857, the Senate wing in 1859. . . . By a vote of 27 to 25, the Senate passed the Walter-Logan Bill subjecting rules and regulations of Executive agencies to judicial review, sent it back to the House with several restrictive amendments. The House previously had passed the measure. . . . The Senate unanimously approved legislation imposing drastic penalties for sabotage in national defense industries or against defense materials, sent it to the White House.

**WASHINGTON.** The Senate elected Senator Walter F. George of Georgia to the chairmanship of the Foreign Relations Committee, to succeed Senator Key Pittman of Nevada. . . . Following Senator King's resolution to remove the bans of the Johnson Act and the Neutrality Law on loans and credits to Great Britain, Senator Nye introduced a motion calling for an inquiry into the extent of British financial resources in the United States. Senator George said the Foreign Relations Committee would eventually consider both resolutions. . . . The Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted unanimously to defer consideration of legislation for financial aid to Great Britain until the next session of Congress. . . . President Roosevelt signed the Ramspeck Bill which covers 200,000 Federal employees into civil service on a non-competitive examination basis. . . . In a unanimous opinion, the Supreme Court reversed the conviction of an eighteen-year-old Negro, sentenced to life imprisonment for rape, on the ground that Harris County, Texas, kept Negroes off the grand jury. Under the statute of limitation provisions in Texas, the Negro will go free. . . . In Washington, delegates from twenty-one American republics opened the first inter-American shipping conference, the objective being to promote shipping and trade facilities among Western Hemisphere nations.

**AT HOME.** Following the issuance of the Dies Committee "White Paper," Attorney General Jackson assailed the Committee, intimated it was hampering the work of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, stated the work of the F.B.I. must be done



quietly, and "should not and must not compete with the legislative committee for publicity." . . . Chairman Dies retorted with an accusation that the F.B.I. hindered the work of his committee, said that "Jackson's record of encouraging Communist organizations in America would do far more to undermine public confidence" than any actions of his. . . . Replying to Representative Dies' telegram urging closer coordination of Government investigating bodies, President Roosevelt replied declaring there should be the closest harmony between "your committee of the House and all administrative departments in the investigation of fifth-column activities in this country." Continuing, the President stated that "the Constitution lodges the executive responsibility in the hands of the President and that, therefore, continuing administrative duties in relation to illegal activities lie in the executive branch of the Government and not in the legislative branch." The President asserted that such actions as "premature disclosure of facts . . . hasty seizure of evidence which might with a little more patience be obtained in a manner to be admissible in court" may "defeat the ends of justice." . . . The Dies Committee issued a 1,000-page report indicating Communist party plans to sabotage defense industries, through civil war to set up a Soviet regime here in the event of this country's entrance into the war. . . . The twelve-day strike at the Vultee Aircraft plant, Los Angeles, Calif., was ended in an agreement between the company and the C.I.O. union. Beginners' pay was raised, a no-walkout contract ratified. . . . The A. F. of L. convention in New Orleans adopted a report calling on its affiliated unions to take "adequate disciplinary action" against racketeer influences. . . . Philip Murray, head of the United Steel Workers Organization, was elected President of the C.I.O. to succeed John L. Lewis, at the C.I.O. convention in Atlantic City. In accepting the new office, Mr. Murray warned the Roosevelt Administration not "to force shotgun agreements between the C.I.O. and the American Federation of Labor." . . . John Cudahy, United States Ambassador to Belgium, in a broadcast speech, defended King Leopold III of Belgium, said the King capitulated to the Nazis only after the British Army had been retiring to Dunkerque for five days and further resistance was hopeless.

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**THE VATICAN.** On November 24, the day he had set aside for world-wide Masses and prayers for peace, Pope Pius uttered another plea for peace. "This old sphere of ours will pass, which seems no longer to suffice for men or to satisfy their contentious aspirations, which in our days have enkindled a conflagration of such gigantic dimensions that it surpasses and almost throws into obscurity the most grandiose events and upheavals in the history of the world," His Holiness declared. Continuing, he said: "The earth will pass . . . but the word of Christ shall not pass. . . . No, the consummation of the world is not yet come . . . the present hour is a phase in the solemn story of humanity predicted by Christ. . . . We have done everything for peace

among nations." . . . Expressing hope for a new order "of things more just and more harmonious, an order which would tend to give to every people in tranquillity, in liberty and in security that portion of the earthly sources of prosperity and power which belongs to each . . ." the Pontiff prayed: "Grant us, O Lord, peace in our days." . . . God "will hear us—at the moment and in the manner which He will have disposed—if we send up to the feet of His throne" trusting and fervent prayer, "enriched by the humiliation of penance," Pope Pius said. . . . Praying Christ to aid those killed and those left destitute by the war, the Pope pleaded: "O Lord, may the peace of concord and justice among nations be restored. . . . Speak that word which will still the storm. Peace among men which Thou desirest is dead. Bring it back to life, O Divine conqueror of death. May justice and charity, on one side and on the other, be in perfect balance, so that all injustice may be repaired and the reign of right restored . . . and may there arise a true and well-ordered peace that will permanently unite as brothers . . . all peoples of the human race, one in Thy sight."

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**WAR.** The victorious Greek army advanced on a 120-mile front, captured Koritza, important Italian base in eastern Albania. Australian and New Zealand troops were reported to be included in the Greek forces. Italian reinforcements were rushed to Albania. . . . While continuing their aerial bombardment of London, German bombers staged repeated "total" air attacks on Liverpool, Birmingham, Bristol, Southampton, Brighton, various Midlands centers, reported they left widespread ruin in their wake. . . . The Royal Air Force hammered the Skoda armament factory at Pilsen, Bohemia, raided Berlin, Vikero, Norway, the Krupp works at Essen, Hamburg, Kiel, the Italian cities of Turin and Bari. . . . Following a four-hour battle off Sardinia between British and Italian warships, airplanes, each side claimed infliction of heavy damage.

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**INTERNATIONAL.** Rumania and Slovakia followed Hungary into the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo pact. . . . Returning to Mexico after four month's absence, General Juan Andreu Almazan relinquished "the honorable position of President of the Republic to which the people were good enough to elect me last July 7." Washington's recognition of Camacho and consideration for the safety of his followers motivated his action, Señor Almazan intimated. . . . A state of anarchy spread in Rumania. Iron Guards executed sixty-four former officials of ex-King Carol before the open tomb of Corneliu Zelea Codreanu, killed during Carol's regime. German soldiers stationed in Rumania marched into Bucharest. . . . Viscount Craigavon, Prime Minister of Ulster, ardent advocate of continued partition of Ireland, died, was succeeded by John Miller Andrews. . . . In the London House of Commons, Cabinet members intimated that the British shipping situation was as serious as in April, 1917.

## PROHIBITION AGAIN

IF you are not too disgusted with pre-election polls, you will find encouragement, or alarm, in a survey recently prepared by the fearless and indefatigable Dr. Gallup. After applying his usual methods, he informs us that some 16,000,000 Prohibitionists went to the polls on November 5.

Obviously, very few of them voted for Mr. Roger W. Babson. Well known as an economist, Mr. Babson was singularly obscure as a candidate for the Presidency on the Prohibition ticket. Had the Prohibitionists marked their ballots for him, Mr. Roosevelt would cease to be President next year, but since about 7,500,000 voted for the President, and 8,500,000 for Willkie, the status was not disturbed. How many votes Mr. Babson received, we are unable to say, but it is possible that Bishop Cannon (to revive an obscure figure) cast a ballot for him.

However, the importance of these figures can be overestimated. Judging by press releases received weekly, they are; still, sixteen millions is a respectable minority, and, properly directed, can once more inflict upon this country the blight of Federal Prohibition. The Prohibition which began in 1917, and was applied to the entire country in 1920, was not created by a majority. It was brought about by an active minority, aided by a war-scare.

The stage seems to be set for another war-scare. In many parts of the country, particularly in the South, the drive for war-time Prohibition, as the first step for nation-wide, peace-time Prohibition, has already begun. All the old arguments have been taken out of the arsenal, and refurbished, and a few new high-power guns have been added. Even Kentucky has its theoretically "dry" counties, although the contiguity of "wet" counties quite commonly lays the dust, and slakes the thirst of the citizenry, in a fairly satisfactory manner.

How this movement can best be fought on the political stage, we leave to others. But the political battle will be lost, unless the support of the manufacturers of strong waters can be enlisted. These will not be serviceable allies, however, if their prime purpose is to increase the sale of whiskey through the country. Now and then, one of the larger manufacturers publishes an advertisement which suggests that whiskey is not the drink for the many, but for the few. That advertisement never seems to ring true. But taking it at face-value, we suggest in turn that every young man, and, we must add, we fear, every young woman, who has never tasted whiskey, resolve never to taste it.

It does not seem to us that the world would lose one whit of its legitimate joys, if there were no whiskey, and would gain many which it does not now perceive. That, however, is nothing more than a personal view, subject to correction by the wise. But no young man, or woman, will lose anything worth having by declining to dally with a distillate which, in itself innocuous, has occasioned the ruin of many.

## EDITOR

### PENTHOUSE AND PRISON

NOW that the elections are over, some of us are jubilant, some resigned, and some still stunned. By next January, all of us will have resumed a judicial temper, and that will be an excellent time for the Gillette committee to resume some of its interrupted hearings. A national election is not a General Absolution, and if political skullduggery controls the elections in some of our largest cities, we have a condition which invites Democrats and Republicans alike to demand reform, even if reform means that some powerful partisans must relinquish their luxurious penthouses for prison-cells.

### CHAIRMAN DIES

THE old country squire who always gave judgment when he had heard the case for the complainant because, he said, to listen to a rebuttal would only confuse his mind, is not an extinct species. He survives, in a modified form, in the Congressional investigation committee.

Why these committees dispense with cross-examination, we have never been able to understand. Their witnesses usually mean to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, but very few people have that comprehensive grasp upon the truth about anything. Cross-examination by an opponent is one of the best means, as most of us have learned by experience, of blowing away the chaff of bias, supposition and assumption.

To that extent, then, we can agree with the Attorney-General in his recent attack upon the Dies Committee. But beyond that limit, we cannot go. Possibly Chairman Dies has not, in every instance, used the best means of getting at the truth in the very grave and complex matters which he is investigating. Some witnesses have flitted in and out of the hearings, alternately making our flesh creep, and our minds question and doubt. But, with all that granted, if we had to choose between Chairman Dies as a fearless prosecutor of Communistic and other subversive factions in this country, and the Attorney-General, set to the same task, Chairman Dies would be our selection.

The Chairman has never been associated with the League for Peace and Democracy, or with the Consumers' National Federation. He



## IN HIS NAME

IT is not quite clear that the enemies of Christianity have begun a campaign in this country to blaspheme the Holy Name of Jesus. But on the stage, and in widely circulated magazines, the Name of Jesus, the Anointed, the Christ foretold in prophecy, is frequently used in a manner that is offensive to well-bred people, and shocking to all who venerate the Saviour of the world. Catholics should publicly protest this affront, wherever possible, and we further suggest that, during the holy season of Advent, they offer prayers and penance in reparation for this repulsive public blasphemy.

## DIES AND A CRITIC

was never a member of the National Lawyers' Guild, or of the League for American Writers. It has never fallen to his lot to ask for the dismissal of indictments handed up against fifteen Communists by a Federal Grand Jury. He has never had the slightest association with any fanatical, and therefore dangerous, Fifth Column or Trojan Horse group. As much cannot be said for more than one official high in the executive department of the Federal Government.

On the other side of the account, it must be recorded that, largely because of the work of the Dies Committee, Nazism and Communism are no longer permitted to work at will in this country. Despite open hostility, displayed almost from the outset by the Administration, the Dies Committee has kept at its work. Chairman Dies was the first to draw attention to the danger of spies, working as employees in the Federal bureaus, and of sabotage in factories with Government contracts. His Committee has helped to make Leftists so unpopular that the C.I.O. has denounced Communism, and the American Youth Congress is no longer entertained at the White House.

When the Attorney-General takes up where Chairman Dies leaves off, and begins a vigorous prosecution of the evils which the Dies Committee has unearthed, he will merit the country's approval. Until then, the long and detailed criticism of the Committee, which he released to the press, must seem singularly petty. What is now required is less talk and more action.

## PHILIP MURRAY

WHEN the C.I.O. in convention at Atlantic City affirmed some pious resolutions condemning Fascism, Nazism and Communism, but declined to condemn Communists now holding office in many of its component units, it was guilty of nothing worse than the policy of compromise, with which our political parties have made us familiar. That is bad enough, in all conscience, but the convention regained some of the ground thus lost by electing as its president the unschooled but scholarly Philip Murray. For Mr. Murray's whole career forbids any compromise with union officials whose real interest is not the welfare of the wage-earner, but the promotion of that synthesis of anti-Christian doctrines which styles itself Communism.

The new president has come up the hard way, and he knows the needs of the worker. He has never sought the favor of political parties or of politicians, and it is no secret that he viewed with misgivings the excursions of his associate, John L. Lewis, into this underworld. He does not ask favors for labor from either party. He demands full recognition of labor's rights from both.

As an organizer, Mr. Murray is easily the first on a list which, it must be confessed, is rather brief. But his example will doubtless induce younger men in the unions to adopt his methods, and thus give labor intelligent and effective leaders. In 1936, with years of experience as vice-president of the largest American union, the United Mine Workers, to guide him, Mr. Murray began a study of the steel industry. After the abortive attempts of the A. F. of L. at organization in this field, many thought that Mr. Murray was losing his time, but these critics did not know their man. Only when he had made himself familiar with the difficulties of the owners as well as those of the workers, was he willing to begin work. Within two years, nearly ninety per cent of the industry, with some 500,000 employees, was organized. Communists who began to bore into the movement, were promptly detected, and ruthlessly expelled.

Now that the workers in the steel industries are fairly well united, it is reassuring to know that Mr. Murray's gifts as a conciliator are as marked as his ability to organize. Conflicts have already arisen; and with the increase in war orders, it is certain that some will not be easily adjusted. As Mr. Murray himself observed, in a radio address on November 22, peace in the mass-producing industries "is essential to the successful prosecution of the Federal Government's national defense program." Production in some centers has been slowed down; in others the factories have been closed. Mr. Murray believes that wherever the discipline of the C.I.O. can be established, it will not be difficult to substitute "industrial peace and stability for industrial warfare in these first lines of defense." We agree, provided that this discipline be enforced, as Mr. Murray enforced it with the mine-workers' unions, and with the steel-workers' organization committee.

If it cannot be so enforced, then the C.I.O. stands

to lose heavily. The Government will certainly step in with rules and regulations administered by some budding young politician with ideas untempered by study and experience. That disaster would certainly stop, at least for the time, collective bargaining. For the Government does not bargain. It issues orders.

As for peace with the A. F. of L., it seems to us that Mr. Murray's first statement after his election has been misinterpreted. He knows the value to labor of an undivided front, but he sees no advantage either to the C.I.O. or to organized labor in general, in a union composed of discordant and battling elements. But the labor world knows that Mr. Murray is a conciliator. He does not avoid a fight at all costs, but he will keep clear of fighting as long as no principle is involved. When either an employer or any authorized spokesman for the A. F. of L. presents an olive branch, he can be sure that it will not be hurled back from a catapult.

It is not likely that the A. F. of L. will seek a merger with the C.I.O. at this time, nor would that merger be immediately desirable. But, at least as far as the public can see, there is no reason why, with the chronic trouble-makers silenced, both groups cannot work in harmony.

## AMERICANS ALL

A GLANCE at a list of residents in New York recently called for military service shows that the Abou Ben Adhem of the regiment is one John Patrick Quinn. At the other end of the local catalog, we perceive the name of M. F. Nash. Between the alpha and the omega are registered Salvatore Samuele Di Capua, Lum Davis, Vazquez Rodriguez, Dave Popowicz, John Douglas, David Dubinsky, Albert Smith, and Leo Joseph Przyshyn.

The metropolis has been styled the gate to freedom for the oppressed of all nations. Some of the oppressed camp immediately within the gate, but others press forward to such great open spaces of the West as Pittsburgh, Chicago, Cleveland, Toledo and St. Louis. Tennyson once wrote that the English people were Saxon, and Norman, and Dane. During the Crimean War, he widened his horizon and welcomed "Slavs, Teutons, and Kelts." "I count them all brother souls," he acknowledged, "with all peoples, great and small, that wheel between the poles."

Somehow these lists make us think of the mean and bitter days of the Ku Klux Klan. When that band of ruffians was at the height of its power, and in some States its political influence was supreme, John Patrick Quinn, David Dubinsky and Leo Joseph Przyshyn, would have been outlawed. Today, they and millions like them, form the backbone of our national defense. We Americans are a mixed stock, Mayflower, Old Dominion and Ellis Island, and that fact alone should suffice to guard us against the Hitlerized theory of any racial supremacy. Whatever our ancestral blood, when we do our duty as citizens, we are all on an equal footing as just plain Americans.

## THE ANGEL

DURING the holy season of Advent, the Church brings to our attention John the Baptist, a Saint praised by Our Lord as a prophet, "and more than a prophet." It was the mission of John to make straight the path for the public manifestation of Jesus as the Messiah, and God had prepared him for this work in many striking ways, chiefly by sanctifying him before his birth. John was a man of great austerity of life; a plain-spoken man who did not hesitate to denounce sin in high place as well as in low. Yet, like so many of the Saints who practised penance in a degree that horrifies us easy-going people, he had a remarkable gift of winning followers. These he instructed in the prophecies concerning the Messiah, and trained to a manner of life which consecrated them to prayer and penance.

In the Gospel for tomorrow (Saint Matthew, xi, 2-10) we are told how John sent two of his disciples to Jesus to ask Him about His mission. Was He really the Messiah, or merely one of those false prophets who were disturbing the people? At this time, John had been thrown into prison for his bold denunciation of the wicked conduct of King Herod. Certainly, the Forerunner of the Messiah had no doubt whatever as to the character of Jesus, but he bade his disciples visit Our Lord in order that they might hear from His Sacred Lips an affirmation of His Messianic character.

Our Lord gives them the proof they sought by referring to His preaching and to His miracles, many of which, as these disciples knew, had been foretold by the prophets. "The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, the poor have the gospel preached to them." This statement at once recalled to the disciples the words which had been spoken by the prophet, "Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall be free: for the waters are broken out in the desert, and streams in the wilderness." (Isaias, xxxv, 5, 6.) Their question was fully answered, then, by the words in which Jesus showed clearly that He was the Messiah, promised for the redemption of Israel.

As the disciples went their way, Our Lord spoke to the people His magnificent tribute to John the Baptist. Many of them had gone out into the desert to see John, and Jesus reminds them that they there saw no reed, shaken by the wind, no man clothed in soft garments, but him of whom it had been written, "Behold, I send my Angel before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee." These were the words of the prophet Malachias (iii, 1) and in quoting them, Jesus again asserted that He was the Messiah.

We do not doubt that Jesus is the Saviour. Our Faith in Him is strong, but is it strong enough to rule our lives in accordance with His law? During Advent, let us pray with Peter, "I believe, O Lord, help thou my unbelief," so that we may walk worthy of the high vocation to which, by God's infinite mercy, we have been called.



# CORRESPONDENCE

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## ATTACKS

EDITOR: Out here on the West Coast we followed with great interest your recent poll on the increase of anti-Catholicism in the States.

Now, what is to be done about correcting the evil? Are the Jehovah's Witnesses, for example, to be permitted their vicious, slanderous attacks without check?

In one of their pamphlets issued this month, amidst a torrent of abuse on the Catholic Church, they single out the Society of Jesus for specially dishonorable mention. You are classed as the "most degraded criminals." And this at a time when the Jesuits are being honored throughout the world on the occasion of their Fourth Centenary!

Is there no due process of law according to which these crusading morons may be put in their proper place?

Santa Barbara, Cal. RICHARD J. FITZMAURICE

## APPEAL

EDITOR: At this holy season the missionary priests and Sisters in charge of the leper colonies of the world stretch out eager hands to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith for an alms for the most needy and helpless of Christ's flock—the lepers.

The stench, the fatigue, the endless bandaging and dressing have become part of the daily lives of the courageous men and women who have given themselves to the service of the lepers. They rejoice in their work, but they are powerless to continue without your aid.

Offerings from the readers of AMERICA may be sent to the director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in their own diocese or to the undersigned, the National Director, at 109 East 38th Street, New York City.

New York, N. Y.

Rt. Rev. Msgr. THOMAS J. McDONNELL

## NO PARAGON

EDITOR: What a pity your correspondent from the backward neck of the woods missed the point of Mrs. Eberhardt's article (AMERICA, September 14).

I am intruding on this discussion as an average Catholic woman who has enjoyed, benefited and been refreshed by taking part in study-club groups for four years. And I do not feel I am, or aim to be, the "paragon" so loftily referred to.

I take my hat off to the "gal from Dubuque" and I hope our complacent, superior and smug Catholics will soon understand the necessity and value of study clubs.

Plainfield, N. J.

M. O. B.

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE

EDITOR: Mr. Hooper's letter (November 23) contains much good, but when he states that foreign-language newspapers are a cause of disunion in the United States, he speaks from a profound ignorance of those newspapers.

In order to love a country you must, first of all, know that country. You may gain that knowledge through experience or through reading. To learn through experience, knowledge of the language is necessary. But those who so lightly pronounce that all immigrants must learn English should pause to think.

There are thousands of intelligent young people studying foreign languages in American colleges who, after four years, will not be able to speak those languages. How should we expect older people, with less trained minds, to learn to talk English readily? To a great majority of adult immigrant, especially women, who stay at home, it is next to impossible to learn English well enough to speak it or to read our papers and magazines. For them the knowledge of America which will help them to know and so to love this country comes through the foreign-language newspapers.

In these papers new Americans read easily in their own languages what is going on in state and national politics: they learn American ideas of home making and child care; they know what people about them are doing and begin to feel themselves a part of the life here. So their knowledge of America grows fast, though their grasp of its language may be slow.

In this connection may I mention the Foreign Language Information Service—an association whose aim is to help native Americans and foreign-born to understand each other. One of their main services is furnishing articles to foreign language papers. They translate into many foreign languages government bulletins and other articles on health, on history, on civics, on occupational opportunities, on leading cities and people—on any subject, in fact, which will be of real value to new-comers to America—and furnish them free to foreign-language newspapers. There they become a real text book for Americanization.

The young generation of immigrant stock will learn our language. Meantime, may we not all be patient with the elders who are trying? Let us

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*(The views expressed under "Correspondence" are the views of the writers. Though the Editor publishes them, he may or may not agree with them; just as the readers may or may not agree with the Editor. The Editor believes that letters should be limited to 300 words. He likes short, pithy letters, and merely tolerates lengthy epistles.)*

not take away the foreign-language publications through which they can learn so much of the matter and spirit which will make them, in spite of language handicaps, real Americans.

Colorado Springs, Colo. MARJORIE P. HOINKO

## BOUQUET

EDITOR: AMERICA, my favorite weekly, is always a source of inspiration, information and delight; I have come to take that for granted. But I couldn't take for granted that clever, subtle satire, *Vox Pop in the Good Grey Poet*, by George Swift, which graced the pages on your October 26 issue. It was really superb! By all means favor us with further articles from the facile pen of this gifted young man. What he couldn't do to Cromwell and Rousseau!

Aberdeen, S. D.

SISTER M. AGNESE

## CONFUSION

EDITOR: Apropos of recent articles and correspondence on the subject of politics, I, too, should welcome a clear-cut exposition of the whole matter.

Is it plain ignorance or just appeasing tolerance (can we *tolerate* error?) that causes such a deal of quibbling and resultant confusion? Or, to voice a widespread argument, do philosophical and theological principles warrant one course of thinking, whereas the expediency of times and conditions justifies another? Verily, Truth, the tyrant, totters on her throne.

Again, what degree of authority ought we attribute to Papal pronouncements, say, to the Bull *Unam Sanctam* of Boniface VIII or more recently to the Encyclical Letters of Pius IX and Leo XIII? As a case in point, with reference to the *Graves de Communi* of Leo XIII, it would appear that some writers fail lamentably to make any distinction between democracy as a political principle and democracy as a social principle. Moreover, the same Pontiff's *Immortale Dei* and *Testem Benevolentiae* set down principles, explained in painstaking detail (to say nothing of implied paternal rebuke) seemingly quite at variance with what one reads at times in the Catholic press and hears from various Catholic rostra.

Chicago, Ill.

JOHN M. MELCHORS

## FEEDING EUROPE

EDITOR: M. J. Fenelon's suggestion is splendid! May I add a suggestion? Perhaps it will meet the difficulties of the conscientious objectors to "feeding the hungry" of Europe.

I would limit contributions to the extent that each donor would promise for each dollar given, each article of clothing contributed—a Memorare for the spiritual welfare of the recipient.

Then—who knows? Perhaps the Patroness of our country, hearing our prayers and seeing the sacrifice, might ask for another miracle of Cana!

May the Queen of Peace help this cause!

Queens Village, N. Y.

ANNE C. KILLEEN

## LABOR ACT

EDITOR: When I wrote my article (AMERICA, May 11) pointing out that the National Labor Relations Act was unsound and unjust in that it vested sole enforcement of the right to organize and bargain collectively in a Board with the power to enforce in every case but not the duty of enforcing it in any case, I had in mind simply the plight of the individual employee who might be denied his rights by arbitrary or capricious refusal of the Board to issue a complaint. I had not conceived of the Act as an instrument of political power in the hands of the Administration.

Listening to John L. Lewis' speech of October 25, however, I was myself startled by the implications of the Act, under which, as I have elsewhere said, "No one got a right, but the Government got a power."

You will recall that Mr. Lewis said that if Mr. Roosevelt were re-elected he would resign, going on to say "This action will save our great movement . . . from the embarrassment and handicap of my leadership during the ensuing reign of President Roosevelt."

I do not pretend to be able to fathom just what was in the speaker's mind when he made that remark, but the following might have been there: (1) For the continued well-being, and perhaps for the existence of the C.I.O., it is necessary that unfair labor practices committed against its constituents be prevented or redressed. (2) The only agency of prevention or redress is the NLRB, which may issue its complaint to restrain the malefactors. (3) The power of the Board to refuse to issue complaints is absolute; there need be no hearing and its refusal is not reviewable by the Courts. (4) The personnel of the Board is pro-Administration. (5) If I, *persona non grata* to the Administration, head the C.I.O., the Board may on that account refuse to issue complaints for the restraint of unfair labor practices against constituents of the C.I.O., and they and I will be powerless to compel the Board to act. (6) Therefore, if I head the C.I.O., the Administration will have the power to impair and perhaps to destroy the C.I.O.

It is apparent that the vice in the Act to which I pointed in the article has a potency for mischief perhaps unparalleled in the history of legislation, for it gives to the Administration: (a) The power to dictate to labor who shall be its leaders; (b) The power to dictate, within uncertain limits, to labor what shall be its policies; (c) The power to control the political vote of labor, perhaps the largest single bloc of votes in the country, whose vote, if unified, can unquestionably control every election.

It is unnecessary to elaborate either on the compelling character of the control or on the number of people brought under it. If the administrative provisions of the Act were conceived as an instrument of political power, their author stands in the front rank of the political geniuses of all times.

Surely the Act is the prototype "of good laws so badly drawn as hardly to be workable."

New York, N. Y.

BERNARD H. FITZPATRICK



# LITERATURE AND ARTS

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## A YARD OF BELLOC, OR TWO

FRANCIS E. MUNTSCH

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WHEN Hilaire Belloc was asked how many books he had written, he replied that he did not know. He has written a cart-load of them since that early date, about 1890, when he told Gertrude Atherton that it was his ambition to write a simple and direct prose, as plain as "Mary had a little lamb." If Belloc does not know how many books he has done up to date, I can answer his question in linear feet. His present output measures ten feet, but it would be more accurate to say twelve or thirteen feet, counting in his volumes of English History and his *Lingard* brought down to modern times.

There is not much point in recalling Eliot's five-foot shelf, but the propriety is at once evident of going into a book shop and asking for a yard or two of Belloc. And the quality need not be specified, because Belloc is all wool.

Putting it another way, Belloc is now seventy years old. That means that he has been producing books for some fifty years, his items now running to 115 or a few more, and something over two books a year is not a bad average in any literary league. From present indications his average is not falling off, for two new volumes are off the presses, one on Chesterton and one, after a lapse of a dozen years, of essays.

They used to say of Philip Guedalla at Oxford, that nobody could possibly be as brilliant as he seemed to be; so, it is just about impossible for a man to turn out the volume of print that Belloc actually does. One might understand it if Belloc stayed down in Sussex and between volumes would farm a bit, but the man is all over the map of Europe, and when he might be expected to be in London, he turns up at Carthage, or the Balearic Islands, is found sailing the Nona around England, walking from Toul to Rome, scaling the Pyrenees, lecturing in New York, finding the source of the Arun or measuring the field at Waterloo with a foot rule.

It is remarkable too, that in this varied and multiplied writing Belloc repeats himself very little. This does not mean that in a fuller work he may not repeat ideas contained in smaller studies. Thus, the thesis "Europe is the Church, and the Church is Europe," runs through almost all his historical works but is elaborated and expanded in his *Europe and the Faith*, and it is, too, the leit-motif running

through his *Crisis of Civilization*. This conclusion of Belloc's is a conviction and not a mere fixation with him. He does not abandon it because some have challenged it. As far as he is concerned, no one has yet refuted it.

And so with many other convictions on subjects of a less vital nature. He sticks to and repeats his "Latin versus Anglo-Saxon" theory about early England and his practice of not cluttering up his pages with historical footnotes and references, even though he be accused of not consulting primary sources. He believes, in this regard, that "Evidence on which we base our historical conclusion must include much more than documents, much more than recorded statements—we have also tradition." . . . "Over and over again a tradition which the learned, depending upon documents alone, have ridiculed turns out upon the discovery of further corroboration to be true."

In his purely subjective or creative writing, you will scarcely find the repetition of one idea. He always has something new and stimulating to say on subjects that range all the way between *Tuppenny Bits* and a *Conversation with an Angel*. These essays are always delightful, humorous and full of aphoristic turns, deeply philosophic at times, containing shrewd observations on human nature and a wealth of learning sometimes packed into a single sentence. It is true that he provokes his readers by his bluntness. "If you don't understand this, I have no time to explain it," or similar remarks provoked one of his English fellow scribes into a haughty "I refuse to be talked to like that."

He is accused of being dogmatic. Well, tenacious is a better word—but if Belloc can "give it" he can also "take it." Witness the scene described in the highly diverting *Essay On a Conversation with a Reader*. It seems that Belloc met on a train a man reading one of his books. He was, of course, elated and "loved" the man. Suddenly the man chucks the book down on the dirty cushion and says: "Silly stuff, that." And the great author meekly agrees. "Never heard of him," says the man, "and what's more I don't ever want to hear of him again. I can't read that stuff; it beats me why people want to publish books like that." "Probably for money," said Belloc. "There can't be much in it," replies the man, and so on, until Belloc buys the book and con-

fesses to himself what miserable stuff it was: "False rhetoric, slipshod construction, affectation and a ghastly lack of interest in all." No, Belloc's sense of humor will keep him from conceit.

Belloc seems to be more highly valued on the other side than on this. Louise Guiney once said he was considered in England an outstanding authority on the French Revolution. His *Hills and the Seas* was an immediate success over there and went through twelve editions; his *Path to Rome* was acclaimed. Oxford was set on its intellectual ear some years ago when he delivered a lecture on Rabelais there and the town buzzed with approval for days. What those, who have written on this lecture, given twenty-eight years ago, fail to note is this, that while the learned Dons read faultless and carefully prepared lectures on Tasso, Petrarch and the rest to a small audience in a small hall, when Belloc's day came the University threw open the largest hall available, "The Examination Schools," and every seat was taken, with scores sitting on the window seats. Moreover, Belloc had no manuscript, but pulled out of his pocket what looked like a crumpled envelope, planted it down on the lectern and, without even looking at it, talked for one solid hour on Rabelais and had the audience absolutely spell-bound. That is why some Oxford Don wrote of Belloc in the *Oxford Magazine* of 1912:

In what regions of the sun  
Do they do as you have done?

And it was said that Oxford had always regretted not giving Belloc a Fellowship to All Souls when he contended for it. The story goes that Belloc's un-academic thesis in that competition was *The Amount of Beer Consumed in the Cotswold in a Year*.

It has been said often, but it will bear repeating, that Belloc is a staunch, virile, militant and fearless champion of the Faith, and so he is. He will carve up Mr. Wells to the King's taste in his *Companion to the Outline* and will flatten him out with great thoroughness and finality in his *Mr. Belloc Still Objects to Wells' feeble Mr. Belloc Objects*. And Dr. Coulton will be disposed of in as neat and clean a piece of history and logic as one would wish to see in Belloc's *The Case of Dr. Coulton*. He is a powerful champion of Catholicity, alert, watchful and ever ready and able to put down error wherever it rears its ugly head. He is one of the greatest apologists for the Faith alive today. He is not the type of man to be pleased with this kind of praise, but he deserves it.

There is not any reason why we should raise a tardy bust to him. For his epitaph he might be quite satisfied with the epigram he wrote for his books:

When I am dead I hope it may be said  
His sins were scarlet but his books were read.

He used to shout with great gusto a refrain, the words of which we hope someday may be verified in him, for all the good work he has done for truth and religion in the last fifty years:

And the gates of Heaven are opening wide  
To let poor Hilary in.

To this, we can only add our hearty "Amen."

## VISKING

RAYMOND A. GRADY

I HAVE always made rather a hobby of etymology. I like to take some word like "prevent" and prove to a spellbound audience, or at least to an audience, that it comes from the Latin *praevenire*, meaning to come before; I mention learnedly that the late Mr. Milton so used it in his *Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity*, and then I trace its descent until it arrives at its present meaning of "hinder" or "stop."

But lately I have been baffled. I picked up a scrap somebody had cut from a magazine, and it contained a recipe for cooking some dish or other. But I had it wrong side to, and the first words that met my eyes were *The Visking Corporation*. I could not find the magazine from which it had been cut, nor, in other magazines, any reference to this Visking Corporation. It was a case of bringing etymological deduction into play.

I naturally supposed it comes from the verb "visk," but dictionaries failed to show any such word. There was "viss," meaning the same as "vis," which turned out to be an East Indian measure. And how it escaped the cross word puzzlers I can't understand. But you just can't stick an "ing" on the end of that and get anything, even if you smuggle the "k" in without authority. I tried "visc," too, but the nearest I could come to that was "vis-cacha," a large, burrowing, chinchilloid rodent. The thing is bothering me.

It reminds me that when I was a child, I was thunderstruck when I had mustered learning enough to read the legend on the back of a teaspoon. It said "1847 Rogers Brothers." Now we were quite a large family—but 1847! I wondered if there were any Rogers sisters. Our family was divided evenly between boys and girls, and when I allowed Mr. Rogers the same number of daughters as sons, the more awe-inspiring it seemed.

But this Visking matter. I imagine it has something to do with sports. The concern probably manufactures something on which a person goes visking. It sound thrilling, and I would like to don one of the things, or perhaps a pair, and indulge. Just imagine rushing uphill and skimming down dale in (or on) your visk or visks, the breeze beating against your ruddy cheeks! Or perhaps the salt spray flying in your face as you dash through the rolling breakers! It seems to me that flying is the only thing comparable to it. And if the address of the concern had been available, long since I would have enclosed a money order for a complete outfit. Regardless of age, I think I should be able to visk with the best of them.

(Editor's Note) The Visking Corporation makes skins for skinless "hot dogs."

(Author's Note) The statement is absurd on the face of it.



# BOOKS

## THROUGH BLUNDERS, BIGOTRY, DIVIDED, WE HAVE STOOD

OLIVER WISWELL. By Kenneth Roberts. Doubleday, Doran and Co. \$3

TO say the least, Mr. Roberts must have taken his courage in both hands and screwed it to the sticking point, to publish this book at this time. For it is a disturbing book—one that plays hob with many patriotic ideals and shibboleths. However justly we may sing now of "The Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave," the tale this historical novel unfolds tells of very little bravery among the Revolutionaries, and of no freedom, save the fanatical brand that brutally check-reins every opinion and course of action save its own.

To give the Loyalist side of the War of Independence, to show that most of the desire for moderation in government, for justice in law, that most of the military knowledge, that all the spirit of toleration and let-live was on the side of those who would have remained loyal to the Crown and settled the difficulties by arbitration—that is bold today, when so much bandying about of the blessed word "democracy" and when pleas for unity even at the expense of intelligent opposition have brought us perilously close to that narrow mentality which thinks that any criticism is treason. And for that courage, Mr. Roberts' disinterestedness and honesty shine out all the brighter.

The story concerns the young man who gives the book its title. The son of an influential Massachusetts lawyer, Oliver is early caught up in the maelstrom through his rescue of Tom Buell, who is being tarred and feathered by a Rebel rabble. The hero of the book is no fighting man; he cannot bring himself to bear arms against his countrymen, but neither can he let himself be swept along by the tide of intemperate demagoguery and bitterness, which was all he and thousands like him saw in the Rebellion. So he devotes himself to the task of writing the history of the troubles, hoping by his dispassioned explanation of England to America and of America to England to do more for the cause of peace and happiness than by shooting his fellows.

His work carries him from Boston, to Halifax, to Paris and London, and finally along the Wilderness Trail in the South, where he and Tom Buell take part in the heroic siege of Ninety-Six. The story is a Roberts' epic. There is action galore, with vivid and heart-warming descriptions of marches, fights, ambushes, of intrigue in high places. But under all the surface turmoil, the great theme of the book is the fundamental incapability or unwillingness of the Englishman to understand the American or to take suggestions or advice from him. The unbelievable stupidities of the English generals, the amused condescension of English ministers, are hit time and again as the true inner reason for the success of the Rebel arms. The book, then, is not to be considered pro-British propaganda. Rather is it a paean of praise for America—a rather left-handed one, but still a true one. For the miracle of miracles about us is, that with such an inauspicious start, wherein success was won mainly through the other side's blunders, wherein unworthy leaders were simply guided by their own rabidness, we have grown both in size and unity and national spirit to be what we are.

Mr. Roberts' story is in his best tradition, and that is high enough praise to send you off to the nearest bookstore at once. Parts of the book are every bit as good as the famous raid and return of Rogers' Rangers. That is especially true of the last parts, which deal with the Wilderness Trail. But the story as a whole lacks the

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intense pace that characterized, for example, *Rabble in Arms*. That is partly because Mr. Roberts is too much at pains to include all his historical material in the texture of the novel. His hero is an historian himself, and when he and Mr. Roberts get together and talk shop, we get a long string on names of the eminent Loyalists that may be instructive, but is provoking. Then, too, the colors are perhaps a little too much naked black and white. What struck me, for instance, was that all the Rebel soldiers, in addition to being draped in tatters (and that may very well be), are invariably pock-marked. In other words, no chance is left untried to paint the Rebels in the worst light.

One or two of the characters are superb. Tom Buell, the racy-tongued, nimble-minded jack-of-all-trades, easily stands out. But Mrs. Bayles and Henrietta Dixon and Cruger and a dozen others are not overshadowed on the vast canvas. Oliver himself is an earnest soul, but am I right in thinking that he is a little priggish? And there is a love story running through it all, but Sally remains a little shadowy. Mr. Roberts is meant to give us men in his books, and when he does, and shows those men fighting for what they think just and right, then you have a book like *Oliver Wiswell*.

HAROLD C. GARDINER

## "JUST FOR A RIBAND TO STICK IN HIS COAT"

FAME IS THE SPUR. By Howard Spring. The Viking Press. \$2.75

IT has been said of many a British colonial who went to England to represent his people's cause, that failure followed, as far as his mission was concerned, whenever he accepted an invitation to tea in London. Whatever the potency of the beverage as brewed in London, the fact remains that the vigor of patriots has seemed to dissolve in a cup of English tea.

In Hamer Shawcross' case it was an invitation to dinner. Personal ambition was the motivating power that actuated his life. For the moment, his goal seemed to him to have been reached with an invitation to dine at Lady Lostwithiel's, and when a Cabinet minister, under the smiles of the gracious lady, singled him out to use his influence in averting a strike in the South Wales' coalfield, he betrayed his party.

The next day he traveled to Wales. "Never before had he felt so furtive and ashamed." He was not in sympathy with the strike; he believed the miners in this case in the wrong. But he realized he had been duped into this intervention by "people who would have been against the miners right or wrong."

Thus the sword of Peterloo, first drawn in defense of the downtrodden while still wet with the blood of the lovely Emma without a family name, and unsheathed by Hamer in the cause of labor, was placed away in a velvet-lined case, the gift of the Lady Lostwithiel. The saber was the inspiration of Hamer's life as well as its symbol. Its encasement in leather and velvet marked his lapse into the *laissez faire* politics of the ambitious, the policies of expediency which eventually won him the peerage.

*Fame Is the Spur* is a grand piece of fiction, built on large-scale proportions, and dealing with the tremendous era that saw the rise of the labor party to power. This is the main theme, but it encompasses other sweeping movements, such as woman suffrage with the Cat and Mouse Act, something "to bring the glow of pride to the face of British statesmanship!"

As in *My Son, My Son!*, Howard Spring shows himself a master of portraiture. The dynamic Hamer Shawcross is his masterpiece. With the ingenious device of prefacing his chapters with excerpts from Hamer's future speeches, he contrasts with sparkling sarcasm his hero in the making with the finished product, the man for



whom fame was the sole ambition. But no less striking is the portrayal of Arnold Ryerson and Tom Hannaway, Pen and Ann and Lizzie and the indomitable Alice, who make of the book a finished canvas. ALBERT WHELAN

## HOMESPUN LOCHINVAR'S YOUNG WESTERN DAYS

FOR US THE LIVING. By Bruce Lancaster. Frederick A. Stokes Co. \$2.75

THE story pictures Abraham Lincoln against the background of his early environment in southern Indiana and central Illinois. The main action follows the fortunes of Abe's friend, Hugh Brace. The families of the two boys belong to what were called "movers," persons who in mere restlessness or because of driving ambition kept pushing westward in response to tales of wonderful land to be had just beyond the horizon.

The Braces are introduced first in their wretched log cabin in northern Kentucky. Matt, the father, is lazy and hankers after whiskey and women. The mother is fondly in love with him, but cruelly oppressed with impossible domestic problems. Their son Hugh is doing a man's work at twelve, but because one of his arms is shorter than the other, he is looked upon as a cripple and is subjected to his father's continuous wail of how different things would be if only he had a normal son to help him. When the Braces follow the Lincolns into Indiana, Hugh and Abe become fast friends, earning their way by hard work on the home farms and by hiring out to neighbors. Indirectly they come into contact with Robert Owen's shortlived experiment in cooperative living at New Harmony. The next shift is to Illinois, and there they share the struggles of the new settlements in Sangamon County and the hardships of the Black Hawk War.

Abe is tall and ungainly and so ugly that he is afraid to ask any girl to the local dances. But from boyhood he is marked as a leader. Besides physical prowess, his great assets are his strength of character, his determination to learn, and his ability to wrestle with problems till he gets right into the heart of them with corresponding power to put his thoughts before an audience in such a way as to impress them with his own convictions. All this is typically illustrated at the first meeting of the town debating society, when Abe cuts the ground from under the distinguished speaker who had orated on the question of setting up a separate government west of the Mississippi. There Abe develops his favorite idea of national unity, won "for us the living" by the heroic sacrifices of those who founded and defended the nation.

The problems of transportation enter prominently into the story, with packers trying to destroy wagon roads and ferrymen threatening to blow up bridges, while on the rivers, fierce rivalry rages between flatboats, keelers and steamers. It is a good account of the rough crowds that made up the citizenry of the pioneer States where good men had to contend with a superabundance of the vicious, reckless, cruel, shiftless and the generally unfit. The story ends in the early eighteen-thirties, when Abe, loaded with debts and sunk in despair, is persuaded by his neighbors to put himself up once more as a candidate for the Illinois Legislature. WILLIAM A. DOWD

WHO WALK ALONE. By Perry Burgess. Henry Holt and Co. \$2.75

THIS is the biographic novel of an American soldier who, during our war with Spain, went to the Philippines, contracted leprosy, came to New York where he was tempted to suicide and, finally, surrendered himself to a heroic, useful and happy life in the colony of Cullion. The author is president and executive officer of the Leonard Wood Memorial (American Leprosy Foundation). His authority and wide experience give the work a scientific as well as an artistic value. The book has many beautiful photographs of the dream is-

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land in the China Sea, and, at the end, a question and answer section that disabuses us again of the hopeless horror we usually attach to leprosy. Mr. Burgess asserts that, though, logically, the disease is spread by personal contact, the kind of contact is not known and the incidence of infection is very small. Leprosy seems positively non-hereditary, usually has little pain attached to it and can be arrested.

Because the story is mainly factual and is told with a deal of tenderness and restraint, it is very moving. The scientific conjoining hurts the book as art, but no one can find quarrel with the author's intent to instruct as well as please. Ned Langford was a brave and inspiring soul. But to those who are lifted to a supernatural life in the strong tolls of sacramental Grace his bravery is helpless and sad beyond thought. He did not need to walk alone. Christ of the lepers could have been his Friend and his Food. The disease of his soul could have been, not arrested, but cured. His burial at Baton Rouge, with military honors, could have had waking on its darkness the glory of the Church Triumphant.

THOMAS BUTLER FEENEY

THE GREAT HATRED. By Maurice Samuel. Alfred A. Knopf. \$2

ACCORDING to Maurice Samuel, Anti-Semitism is not only no ordinary race problem, but it is part of an attack on Christ and Christianity. Nazi-Fascism rests upon the pagan ideal that strength and force are the measures of human worth, and leaves no place for a relationship of the individual to God: from which doctrine, of course, the teachings of Our Lord and the Old Testament are poles away.

In his book the author indicates that Nazis regard Christianity as a product of Judaism and, because of an unwillingness to attack it openly, they wreak their hatred on the Jews instead. He also discusses some of the fantastic myths circulated about the Jews, and he seeks to correct the attitude taken toward his people even by their friends.

Unfortunately, Mr. Samuel makes Christianity merely a part of the Judeo-Christian Philosophy; and cites the example of Israel Baal Shem Tov to show that Judaism tends to evolve such anti-Nazi types from time to time. Such a misconception greatly offsets the ability and good intentions of the author.

JOHN HARRINGTON

GROWING PAINS. By Wanda Gág. Coward-McCann, Inc. \$3.75

DIARIES are fascinating things. People like to write them, and particularly, they like to read the diary of some one else. Thus, Wanda Gág, now one of the outstanding print-makers of America, has been persuaded to publish what she had written for herself, during her adolescent years, from 1908 to 1917. This book she has called *Growing Pains*.

Wanda Gág has a background, typical of many successful persons in this country. Her father was an artist, born in Bohemia, as were her mother's parents. Her father died when Wanda was fifteen, the eldest of seven children. In spite of their poverty, Wanda was determined that they should all be educated. This task had to be accomplished almost entirely through her own creative talent, which she had resolved to develop.

While her story is mainly about her struggles, aspirations and girlish romances, during those difficult years of growing up, it is also a vivid picture of youth in any American city, up to the time of the war. The friends she made at the Art Schools in St. Paul and Minneapolis were serious students. They were groping for the modern medium of expression, and considered themselves very daring and advanced in their reading and theories of life. But they had come from Christian homes and they still believed in God and the value of virtue and character in their lives.

The book is filled with charming sketches that Wanda was continually making. These give a complete record of her artistic progress from 1906 to the present day.

CATHERINE MURPHY



# MUSIC

AFTER several weeks of heralding with mysterious and misleading publicity, the Disney-Stokowski creation, *Fantasia*, has unloosed its bag of tricks. Apparently very few knew just what to expect, but everyone was given to understand that it was something new and decidedly different. When those closest to the production were asked for at least a clue to its description, the answer invariably ran along the evasive lines of "You'll just have to wait and see; it's impossible to describe in the light of any past entertainment."

Now that the picture has been released, their claim seems a bit too great. Perhaps they had forgotten the first Silly Symphony, *The Skeleton Dance* to Saint Saens' *Danse Macabre*, I believe, and the second, *Flowers and Trees*, in which the music of Grieg figured. *Fantasia* is a sort of post-graduate course in Bach, Beethoven, Stravinsky, Moussorgsky and others. But in this production, the music was purportedly not a mere accompaniment to, but actually the basis for the screen's visualization. That it was so, is debatable. The oohs and ahs, laughs and sighs of the audience were by no means conjured by the music, but by the imaginative drawings, clever to the point of distraction. If the sound track were silenced, the audience reaction to many sequences would undergo no drastic change. If the screen were darkened, the story would be entirely different.

To encroach upon the self-sufficiency of music is a risk not just in the light of preconceptions, but also because of the nature of the art itself. Its transporting qualities are enough in themselves. Thus, upon hearing the serene and healthy atmosphere evoked by Beethoven's brook in his Sixth Symphony, it is a shock to be shown a miserably pale stream with several coquettish, lavender-haired centaur maidens bathing therein. Nor does it help matters to clutter the landscape with flying horses, mythological amours and cupids with heart-shaped posteriors. Light pink and powder blue are not expected in Beethoven any more than they are in Rembrandt.

In the *Sorcerer's Apprentice* and *Dance of the Hours* Disney is his old, more likeable self. Both ballet pieces, they are music ideally suited to be complemented by visual motion. In both, the priceless function of animated cartoons is served by giving the ballet parts to animals. An animated drawing of a human being as a human being, or of an animal as an animal seldom achieves a very high interest level. But when an animal burlesques his superiors the fascination is undeniable.

The film's sound reproduction, beautifully segregating the instrumental choirs, is more perfect than any other motion picture to date, but with thirty-two speakers behind the screen and sixty-four placed throughout the theatre, it is also unfortunately louder. The sonorities of the *Pastoral Symphony's* fourth movement no longer suggest a storm, they are one. The music of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* often comes perilously close to sheer din. This may presage the day when our present symphony orchestras will seem like timid pipsqueaks. Yet when the sound track did soften down, perhaps from sheer exhaustion, for the closing strains of Schubert's *Ave Maria*, the gratifying effect was nearly ethereal with the choir members singing antiphonally from various locations in the hall. Throughout the film the Philadelphia Orchestra plays with a superb tonal sheen.

Of course my remarks have been made with the reservations arising from trying to hold to a certain amount of musical integrity. Naturally, if approached as a novel form of pure entertainment, the while forgetting the artistic claims of the production, there is probably little to cavil with in *Fantasia* except a dearth of plot. Even so, the fun of having old friends dress up in false faces has its limits.

JOHN P. COVENEY

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# THEATRE

TWELFTH NIGHT. Apparently realizing at last that the autumn theatrical season of 1940 was dying on its feet, New York has finally given us an electrifying change for the better. The version of *Twelfth Night* put on by the Theatre Guild and Gilbert Miller at the St. James Theatre, with Helen Hayes and Maurice Evans in the leading rôles, would save any season. It is a superb production, superbly acted by the majority of the members of its big company, directed to perfection by Margaret Webster, and with settings and costumes by Stewart Chaney that are so good one hardly notices them. In other words they are the fitting background of the production, as they should be, and do not distract the eyes of the absorbed audiences.

For the audiences are absorbed, even in the dull moments of the old Shakespearean comedy—and even its warmest admirers must admit that it has those moments. But the Shakespearean fans who rarely turn out for anything but a performance by their master, and the Broadway enthusiasts who will turn out for almost any kind of play, enjoy *Twelfth Night* in happy unison; and for once, under the spell of the acting of Miss Hayes and Mr. Evans, they are equally thrilled. The Broadwayites will find a few faults in the text and situations, but no one has any complaint to make of the acting or direction; and everybody is really happy.

Happiest of all, perhaps, is Miss Hayes, whose long-time dream of playing a star rôle in a Shakespearean comedy is so triumphantly successful the first time she attempts it. She is still—as Viola, of course—not quite as sure of herself as usual—a trifle nervous in her new rôle and her masculine clothes. But I write immediately after the second performance. A few more performances—and the enthusiasm of the critics!—will give her the assurance her audiences have already given, that an enchanting Viola is before them.

Mr. Evans' acting as Malvolio is what we expected of him—brilliant, deeply satisfying and incredibly, after all the centuries, a bit different from the interpretations of the great Malvolios of the past. He is arrogant, he is strutting, he is incredibly vain, as they have all made him: but the Cockney Malvolio on the stage of the St. James these nights is also human, at moments pathetic, and at other moments even appealing. It is an amazingly vivid portrayal Mr. Evans gives the world. Seeing it, one feels not only scornful pity for Malvolio but an almost affectionate compassion.

Recalling the work of the remaining players I liked best that of June Walker, who romps gorgeously through the rôle of Marie, of Sophie Stewart as Olivia, charming and dignified even in her difficult final scenes with Viola, of Wallace Acton as Sir Andrew—a part that has over-taxed many excellent actors—and, with underlining, Donald Burr's admirable performance of the difficult rôle of Feste, the clown. Many actors have gone down before that; but Mr. Burr's grace, agility, diction and spirit are equal to all the heavy demands made on them.

In the end, as in the beginning, however, the mind turns to Miss Hayes—to her personal charm as Viola, to her exquisite and delicate comedy, to her humaneness and naturalness, to her immediate intelligent and emotional response to every demand of one of the most difficult as well as one of the most attractive of Shakespearean rôles. We have so many amazingly good actresses on the American stage that I have never been quite sure up till now that Miss Hayes is the best. After seeing her Viola, I rather think she is—or will be, when this New York season ends—always excepting Ethel Barrymore. The one thing I regret is that Shakespeare did not give Miss Hayes more scenes with Malvolio!

ELIZABETH JORDAN



# FILMS

**THE LETTER.** The great and alienating flaw in the naturalistic technique, which apparently does not forbid selection but only the selection of anything pleasant, is that it rules out sympathy as surely as it does condemnation. Thus Somerset Maugham's study of a corrupt woman brings out her every fault most faithfully, and then smugly takes refuge in the terse objectivity of the police blotter, or the case book. Any reaction on the part of the other characters is purely personal and does not reflect the policy of the management. Mr. Maugham thereby satisfies our morbid curiosity, but not our emotions and certainly not our reason, setting himself up as a more subtle Madame Tussaud. This story of a murder of passion on a Singapore rubber plantation unwinds merely to reveal a psychopathetically clever murderess who plays upon her lawyer's regard for her husband to make him suppress evidence which would transform her in the public eye from an unfortunate victim to a calculating killer. But the Eurasian wife of the victim, whose resemblance to retribution is purely coincidental, garrotes the guilty woman to close as sordid an affair as may be found in Asiatic police records. Bette Davis delineates an unlovely character with chilling precision matched only by William Wyler's deliberate, probing direction. James Stephenson, Gale Sondergaard and Herbert Marshall are effective, but *adults* must supply their own moral implications for a film which is *painfully unaware* of such things. (Warner)

**LITTLE NELLIE KELLY.** George M. Cohan's musical play about a family feud is attuned to the times in this sprightly screen version which moves in jig time and makes its few lulls interesting by rich characterization. Norman Taurag has given Judy Garland free play as the young girl who finally reconciles her grandfather and her father. Grandfather comes to America with his daughter and son-in-law, but their relations stop. When his granddaughter is left motherless, he cares for her, but leaves the house over a disagreement with her father. Reconciliation follows only after grandfather, who has been allergic to work, is discovered driving a cab. A St. Patrick's Day parade, highlighting the gallant police force, mellows the atmosphere considerably. Singing is the least of Miss Garland's talents when she is given an opportunity to freshen up a faded plot, but she is extended by Charles Winninger's portrait of an amiable drifter. George Murphy is also capable in an enjoyable *family production* with music. (MGM)

**TIN PAN ALLEY.** The chief interest in this mechanically smooth production is its revival of some ancient melodies and some older plot material. The business of song plugging is duly exploited, making it easy and almost logical to drag in songs at will. The romantic rift between a song-writer and his singer wife is patched up by the World War, rather a neat paradox for so pedestrian a story, even if unintentional. Jack Oakie establishes himself as a comedian, with Alice Faye and John Payne adding romantic touches to the *usual adult musical comedy formula*. (Twentieth Century-Fox)

**GALLANT SONS.** This is a juvenile item which makes the mistake of investigating the seamy side of life, thus limiting its recommendation to the adult group which is wholly unlikely to swallow its flagrant flights of fancy. The son of a gambler unjustly convicted of a murder joins with the son of the editor who helped convict him and they trap the culprit by a throwback to *Hamlet*. Jackie Cooper, Bonita Granville, Ian Hunter and Gail Patrick are adequate in a *weak entertainment*. (MGM)

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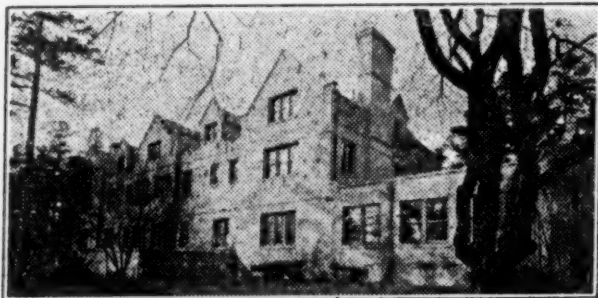
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VARIOUS forms of curiosity were externalized. . . . A Denver citizen revealed to police that after twenty-six years he had become curious to find out if the Detroit man he hit with a hammer in 1914 survived. To satisfy his curiosity, police launched a check-up. . . . When the rumor spread that the new aerial-ladder truck of Berkeley, Calif., had the defect of turning too abruptly, a city manager, councilman, fire chief and fire-apparatus salesmen, all from different cities, grew curious, decided to see for themselves. They mounted the truck. At the first turn all four were thrown to the earth. At the expense of a few minor bruises, they gratified their curiosity. . . . Note-writing increased. In Zanesville, O., thieves, after stealing milk from porches, left notes to the milkman for whipping cream, then stole the whipping cream. . . . The need of better protection for police was glimpsed. In Tuckahoe, N. Y., a police car standing in front of police headquarters was stolen. . . . First-aid technique improved. . . . In Kansas City, a goldfish in extremity rallied after bicarbonate of soda was dropped into the bowl. . . . Ingenious ideas germinated. . . . A Cleveland man perfected spinach ice cream, announced he would soon produce fig, date, raisin ice creams and tomato sherbet. . . . Surprises resulted from codifications. . . . In Fort Lauderdale, Fla., a codification of the ordinances of the last eighteen years unearthed a regulation still in force which requires that all horses must be equipped with horns and tail-lights. . . . The pre-insertion pull of advertisements was demonstrated. . . . A Williamsport, Pa., woman telephoned an advertisement for lost glasses to a newspaper. A reporter found the glasses. The woman recovered them while the advertisement was still running through the presses. . . .

In the Educational World. . . . In the world's largest high school, situated in New York City, young students formed a gang, extorted tribute from fellow-students. The youthful gangsters beat boys in the school washrooms for nickels, dimes, forced vendors near the school to pay them weekly tribute to prevent pushcarts from being overturned. Similar conditions prevail in other high schools, it was said. Detectives disclosed they get an average of sixty cases a week. . . . Declared a Magistrate: "I know of this deplorable condition in our public high schools. Many cases have been brought to me, some of which I had to hold for higher courts." . . . Many subjects are taught in our modern high schools. In fact, every subject but one. . . . The introduction of that one into the curriculum would lighten the burden of detectives and magistrates. . . . Three students of an Eastern university were arrested for disorderly conduct, sentenced to thirty days in jail. Declared the committing magistrate: "You'll learn more in thirty days where you are going than in four years of college." . . . At any rate, this may be said—atheism is not taught in jails. . . . A professor eulogistically described a new system of logic which denies the "old-fashioned" logical principle that a thing is either so or not so. . . . Now, it appears, a thing may be so or not so or neither so or not so. . . . This new system of logic seems to fall under the heading of not so. . . . Perhaps the high-school gangsters figured what would be stealing under the "old-fashioned" logic is now under the new logic somewhere in between stealing and not stealing. Unfortunately for them, the "old-fashioned" police are still operating on the presumption that stealing is stealing. . . . All of which provokes the query: what is this stuff they are handing out in the secular schools? Is it education or not education or something in between?

THE PARADER